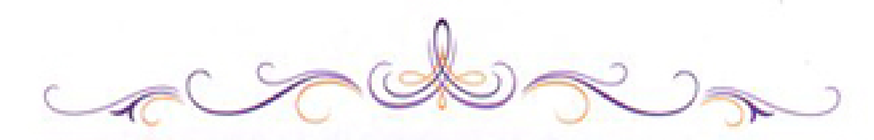


The Biography of



'Uthmân Ibn 'Affân

Dhun-Noorayn



By: Dr. Ali Muhammad As-Sallabi

Translated by: Nasir Khattab



بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

Bismi Allahi Alrrahmani Alrraheemi

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful

سيرة عثمان ابن عفان رضي الله عنه

The Biography of

'Uthmân Ibn 'Affân رضي الله عنه

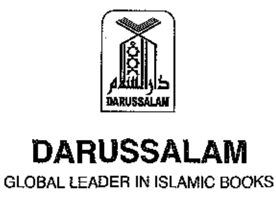
Dhun-Nooray n



By: Dr. Ali Muhammad as-Sallabi

Translated by: Nasir Khattab

Edited by: Hoda Khattab



DARUSSALAM

GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

Contents

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 4

Contents

Chapter 1

'Uthmân Ibn 'Affân ﷺ Dhun-Noorayn Between Makkah And Madînah

His name, lineage, *kunyah*, nicknames, physical attributes and family, and his status during the *Jâhiliyyah*

His name, lineage, *kunyah* and nicknames

1 - He was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ibn Abi'l-'Aas ibn Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manâf ibn Qusayy ibn Kilâb.[1] His lineage coincides with that of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in 'Abd Manâf. His mother was Arwa bint Kurayz ibn Rabee'ah ibn Habeeb ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manâf ibn Qusayy.[2] Her mother was Umm Hakeem al-Bayda' bint 'Abd al-Muttalib, who was the full sister of 'Abd-Allâh, the

---

[1] *At-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/53; *Al-Isâbah*. 4/377, no. 5463.

[2] *At-Tamheed wal-Bayân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân*, by Muhammad Yahya al-Andalusi, p. 19

father of the Prophet ﷺ, and it was said that they were twins (this was narrated by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkâr). So he was the son of the cousin (daughter of paternal aunt) of the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ was the cousin (son of maternal uncle) of his mother. The mother of 'Uthmân became Muslim and died during the caliphate of her son 'Uthmân, and he was among those who carried her to her grave.[1] 'Uthmân's father died during the *Jâhiliyyah*.

2 - His *kunyah* during the *Jâhiliyyah* was Abu 'Amr. When Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ bore him a son, he named him 'Abd-Allâh and took his *kunyah* from him, so the Muslims called him by the *kunyah* of Abu 'Abd-Allâh.[2]

3 - 'Uthmân ﷺ was known by the nickname of Dhun-Noorayn (the one with the two lights). Badr al-Deen al-'Ayni said in his commentary on *Saheeh al-Bukhâri* that it was said to al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah[3] : Why was 'Uthmân called Dhu'n-Noorayn? He said: Because we did not know anyone who married two daughters of a Prophet except him.[4] 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar ibn Abân al-Ju'fi said: My maternal uncle Husayn al-Ju'fi said to me: O my son, do you know why 'Uthmân was called Dhu'n-Noorayn? I said: I do not know. He said: No one else was ever married to two daughters of a Prophet, from the time Allâh created Adam until the Hour will begin, except 'Uthmân. Hence he was

---

[1] *al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah wa'l-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah*, by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya, p. 388

[2] *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân*, p. 19

[3] He was al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah al-Azdi al-'Aqali, one of the great commanders. al-Muhallab invaded India during the caliphate of Mu'âwiyah, and he was a governor for Ibn al-Zubayr. He fought the Khawârij during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwân, then he became governor of Khorasan in 79 AH. He is famous for having fought the Khawârij. He died in 83 AH. See *Wafiyât al-A'yân*, 5/350; *Siyar A'lâm An-Nubala'*, 4/383

[4] *'Umdat al-Qâri Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhâri*, 16/201

called Dhu'n-Noorayn.[1] And it was said that he was called Dhu'n-Noorayn because he used to recite a great deal of Qur'ân in his prayer every night, and the Qur'ân is light and praying *qiyâm al-layl* is light.[2]

4 - His birth. He was born in Makkah six years after the Year of the Elephant, according to the correct view.[3] And it was said that he was born in al-Tâ'if. He was about five years younger than the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.[4]

5 - His physical attributes: he was neither short nor tall, soft skinned, with a huge thick beard, big-boned, broad-shouldered, with thick hair on his head, and he used to dye his beard with saffron. Az-Zuhri said: 'Uthmân was a man of average height, with handsome hair and face and a bald spot; he was bow-legged[5] , with a hooked nose, big calves, and long arms that were covered with hair. He had the most handsome mouth of all people, his hair came down below his ears, and he had a handsome face. It is most likely that he was white-skinned, and it was said that he was dark skinned.[6]

His Family

'Uthmân ﷺ married eight wives in all, all of them after Islam. They were: Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, who bore him 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Uthmân. Then he married Umm Kulthoom the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, after Ruqayyah died. He also married Fâkhitah bint Ghazwân, who was the sister of the governor 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân, and she bore 'Uthmân 'Abd-Allâh the younger; Umm 'Amr bint Jundub al-

[1] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 7/73. Dr. 'Aatif Lamâdah said: a hasan report.

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân Dhu'l-Noorayn*, by 'Abbâs al-'Aqqâd, p. 79

[3] *al-Isâbah*, 4/377, no. 5465

[4] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 45

[5] *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 5/440

[6] *Sifat al-Safwah*, 1/295; *Saheeh al-Tawtheeq fi Seerat wa Hayât Dhi'l-Noorayn*, p. 15

Azdiyyah, who bore 'Uthmân 'Amr, Khâlid, Abân, 'Umar and Maryam. And he married Fâtimah bint al-Waleed ibn 'Abd Shams ibn al-Mugheerah al-Makhzoomiyyah, who bore him al-Waleed, Sa'eed and Umm Sa'd. And he married Umm al-Baneen bint 'Uyaynah ibn Husn al-Fizâriyyah, who bore him 'Abd-Allâh. And he married Ramlah bint Shaybah ibn Rabee'ah al-Umawiyyah, who bore him 'Aa'ishah, Umm Abân and Umm 'Amr. Ramlah became Muslim and swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. And he married Nâ'ilah bint al-Farâfisah al-Kalbiyyah, who was a Christian, then she became Muslim before he consummated the marriage with her and she became a good Muslim.[1]

He had nine sons from five wives. They were: 'Abd-Allâh, whose mother was Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He was born two years before the Hijrah and his mother took him with her when she migrated with her husband 'Uthmân to Madînah. During his first days in Madînah a rooster pecked him on the face, near his eye, and the (infection) spread until it covered his whole face. He died in 4 AH when he was six years old.[2]

His other sons were:

'Abd-Allâh the younger, whose mother was Fâkhitah bint Ghazwân; 'Amr, whose mother was Umm 'Amr bint Jundub; he narrated hadeeth from his father and from Usâmah ibn Zayd, and 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab and Abu'l-Zinnâd narrated from him, but he narrated only a few hadeeth. He married Ramlah bint Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân, and died in 80 AH.

Khâlid, whose mother was Umm 'Amr bint Jundub.

Abân, whose mother was Umm 'Amr bint Jundub. He was a

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/441; *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân*, p. 19; *al-Ameen Dhu'l-Noorayn*, by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 364

[2] *al-Ameen Dhu'l-Noorayn*, by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 365; *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân fiMaqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân*, p. 19

leading scholar of fiqh, and was known by the *kunyah* of Abu Sa'eed. He was governor of Madînah for seven years during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwân. He narrated a few ahâdeeth, including the hadeeth that he narrated from 'Uthmân:

«مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَقُولُ فِي صَبَاحِ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَمَسَاءِ كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ بِسْمِ اللهِ الَّذِي لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ العَلِيمُ ـ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ ـ لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ شَيْءٌ».

"Whoever says at the beginning of each day and night: 'In the name of Allâh with Whose name nothing can cause harm on earth or in heaven, and He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing,' nothing will harm him that day or that night."

When Abân became paralyzed on one side, he said: By Allâh, I forgot this du'â' so the decree of Allâh befell me.[1]

He was regarded as one of the fuqaha' of Madînah of his time. He died in 105 AH.[2]

'Umar, whose mother was Umm 'Amr bint Jundub.

Al-Waleed, whose mother was Fâtimah bint al-Waleed ibn 'Abd Shams ibn al-Mugheerah al-Makhzoomiyyah.

Sa'eed, whose mother was Fâtimah bint al-Waleed al-Makhzoomiyyah. He became governor of Khorasan in 56 AH at the time of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân.

'Abd al-Malik, whose mother was Umm al-Baneen bint 'Uyaynah ibn Husn. He died in childhood.

And it was said that Nâ'ilah bint al- Farâfisah bore 'Uthman a son who was named 'Anbasah.[3]

He had seven daughters from five wives, including: Maryam, whose mother was Umm 'Amr bint Jundub; Umm Sa'eed, whose

---

[1] *Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Kitâbal-Da'wât*, no. 3388. A saheeh hadeeth.

[2] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'* (4/253); *Tareekh al-Qadâ'i*, p. 308.

[3] *Al-Ameen Dhu'l-Noorayn* by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 369

mother was Fâtimah bint al-Waleed ibn 'Abd Shams al-Makhzoomiyyah; 'Aa'ishah, whose mother was Ramlah bint Shaybah ibn Rabee'ah; Maryam bint 'Uthmân, whose mother was Nâ'ilah bint al- Farâfisah; and Umm al-Baneen, whose mother was a concubine *(umm walad)*.[1]

The full sister of 'Uthmân was Aaminah bint 'Affân, who worked as a hairdresser during the Jâhiliyyah, then she married al-Hakam ibn Kaysân, the freed slave of Hishâm ibn al-Mugheerah al-Makhzoomi. An expedition led by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Jahsh captured al-Hakam ibn Kaysân, and in Madînah he embraced Islam and became a good Muslim. He stayed with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ until he was killed as a martyr in the battle of Bi'r Ma'oonah, at the beginning of the fourth year after the Hijrah. Aaminah bint 'Affân stayed in Makkah and remained a mushrik until the Conquest, then she became Muslim along with her mother and the rest of her sisters, and she swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ along with Hind bint 'Uqbah, the wife of Abu Sufyân, pledging not to associate anything with Allâh, steal or commit zina.[2]

'Uthmân had three brothers through his mother. They were:

al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet, whose father was killed on the day of Badr when he was a prisoner, and he was a kâfir. Al-Waleed went out with his brother 'Amârah after al-Hudaybiyah to bring back their sister Umm Kulthoom, who had become Muslim and migrated, but the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ refused to give her back. He became Muslim on the day of the Conquest of Makkah.

'Amârah ibn 'Uqbah, who was late in coming to Islam.

Khâlid ibn 'Uqbah.

'Uthmân's sisters through his mother were:

Umm Kulthoom bint 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet, who became

---

[1] *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân*, p. 20.

[2] *Al-Ameen Dhu'l-Noorayn* by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 346

Muslim in Makkah and migrated and swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. She was the first woman to migrate after the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came back to Madînah after the treaty of al-Hudaybiyah.

Other sisters through his mother were: Umm Hakeem bint 'Uqbah and Hind bint 'Uqbah.

His status during the *Jâhiliyyah*

During the *Jâhiliyyah*, 'Uthmân ﷺ was among the best of his people. He was of high status, very wealthy, extremely modest, and eloquent in speech. His people loved him dearly and respected him. He never prostrated to any idol during the *Jâhiliyyah* and he never committed any immoral action. He did not drink alcohol before Islam and he used to say: It (alcohol) destroys reason and reason is the most sublime thing that Allâh has given to man, and man should elevate himself by means of reason, not try to destroy it. Similarly, during the *Jâhiliyyah* he was not attracted to songs or entertainment. 'Uthmân also used to refrain from looking at any 'awrah.[1] May Allâh have mercy on 'Uthmân ﷺ, for he made it easy for us to get to know him, when he said: "I had no interest in songs, I never committed any immoral deed, and my right hand never touched my private part since I swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. I did not drink alcohol during the *Jâhiliyyah* or in Islam, and I did not commit zina during the *Jâhiliyyah* or in Islam."[2] He was well versed in the knowledge that was available to the Arabs during the *Jâhiliyyah*, including lineages, proverbs, and the history of important events. He travelled to Syria and Abyssinia, and mixed with non-Arab peoples, learning things about their lives and customs that no one else knew.[3] He took care of the business that he had inherited from his father, and his wealth grew. He was regarded as one of the men of Banu Umayyah who were held in

---

[1] *Mawsoo'at al-Tareekh al-Islami*, by Ahmad Shalaby, 1/618

[2] *Hilyat al-Awliya'*, 1/60, 61. This report is saheeh.

[3] *'Aqbariyyat 'Uthmân* by al-'Aqqâd, p. 72

high esteem by all of Quraysh. In the *Jâhili* society of Makkah in which 'Uthmân lived, men were respected for their wealth and for the number of children and brothers they had, then for the tribe and people to which they belonged. 'Uthmân was regarded as being of high status among his people, and he was loved dearly.

Among the evidence which points to the people's love for 'Uthmân because of this combination of good qualities is the report which says that at that time, an Arab woman would sing to her child a song which speaks of the people's respect and love for him:

"By the most Merciful, I love you as much as Quraysh love 'Uthmân."[1]

His coming to Islam

'Uthmân was thirty-four years old when Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq called him to Islam, and he did not hesitate at all, rather he responded immediately to the call of Abu Bakr. Thus he was one of the earliest Muslims, of whom Ibn Ishâq said: The first person to become Muslim after Abu Bakr, 'Ali and Zayd ibn Hârithah was 'Uthmân.[2] Thus he was the fourth man to embrace Islam. His coming to Islam so early was, perhaps, the result of what happened to him when he was returning from Syria. He told the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about that when he entered upon him along with Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh and he presented Islam to them and recited Qur'ân to them, and told them of the duties of Islam and promised them that they would be honoured by Allâh. They believed him, and 'Uthmân said: O Messenger of Allâh, I have come recently from Syria, and when we were between Ma'ân and al-Zarqa', I was about to sleep when I heard a voice calling: O sleepers, get up, for Ahmad has emerged in Makkah. Then we came here and heard about you.[3]

---

[1] *Mawsoo'at al-Tareekh al-Islami,* 1/618

[2] *al-Seerah al-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 1/287-289

[3] *at-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/55

Undoubtedly this incident had a positive effect on 'Uthmân and he could not forget it when he could see all the facts before him with his own eyes. How could anyone who heard of the emergence of a Prophet before reaching the city in which he lived, and found upon his arrival that what he had heard was true, then hesitate to respond to the call? No matter how arrogant a man may be, he cannot fail to submit to the truth; if he tries to ignore it his conscience will continue to trouble him until he either believes in it or dies, thus saving himself from the stirrings of his conscience. 'Uthmân's quick response was not based on foolishness or rashness, rather it was based on certainty and firm belief that left no room for doubt.[1] He thought about this new call calmly, as was his way in all things, and he found that it was a call to virtue, a call to shun immorality, a call to Tawheed and a warning against shirk, a call to worship Allâh and a warning against heedlessness, a call to good morals and a warning against bad morals. Then he looked at his people and saw them worshipping idols, eating dead meat, mistreating their neighbours and regarding as permissible forbidden things such as the shedding of blood, etc.[2] But the Prophet Muhammad ibn 'Abd-ullâh ﷺ was sincere and trustworthy; he knew nothing but good about him and he had heard nothing bad about him. He was never known to tell a lie or commit any act of treachery. He was calling for the worship of Allâh alone with no partner or associate, and for the upholding of family ties, kind treatment of neighbours, prayer and fasting, and not worshipping anything other than Allâh.[3] So he became Muslim at the hands of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, and he persisted in his faith, calling others to Islam in a friendly and patient manner; he was content, forgiving, kind, charitable, compassionate and generous, helping the weak and oppressed until Islam became strong.[4]

---

[1] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen*, p. 302

[2] See: *Marwiyât al-'Ahd al-Makki*, by 'Aadil 'Abd al-Ghafoor, 2/805

[3] *Fitnah Maqtal 'Uthmân*, by Dr. Muhammad 'Abd-Allâh al-Ghabân, 1/37

[4] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 53

His marriage to Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

The Muslims rejoiced greatly when 'Uthmân became Muslim, and the bonds of love and brotherhood between him and them were strengthened when Allâh honoured him with marriage to the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, Ruqayyah. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had given her in marriage to 'Utbah ibn Abi Lahab, and he had given her sister Umm Kulthoom in marriage to 'Utaybah ibn Abi Lahab, but when *Sûrat al-Masad* was revealed -

﴿تَبَّتْ يَدَآ أَبِى لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ○ مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُۥ وَمَا كَسَبَ ○ سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ ○ وَٱمْرَأَتُهُۥ حَمَّالَةَ ٱلْحَطَبِ ○ فِى جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍۭ﴾

"Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab (an uncle of the Prophet) and perish he! His wealth and his children will not benefit him! He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! And his wife, too, who carries wood (thorns of Sa'dân which she used to put on the way of the Prophet ﷺ or use to slander him). In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad (palm fiber)" (*Al-Masad* 111:1-5)

Abu Lahab and their mother Umm Jameel bint Harb ibn Umayyah - the "carrier of wood" - told them to leave the daughters of Muhammad, so they separated from them before they had consummated the marriage with them, as an honour to them from Allâh and as a humiliation to the sons of Abu Lahab.[1] No sooner did 'Uthmân hear the news of the divorce of Ruqayyah but he was filled with joy and he hastened to propose marriage to her through the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave her in marriage to him, and the Mother of the Believers Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid prepared her

[1] *Dhu'n-Noorayn 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Muhammad Rasheed Rida, p. 12

and presented her to him. 'Uthmân was one of the most handsome men of Quraysh and she competed with him in beauty and gracefulness. It was said to her when she was presented to him:

The best looking couple anyone has ever seen, is Ruqayyah and her husband 'Uthmân.[1]

It was narrated from 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Uthmân al-Qurashi that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ entered upon his daughter when she was washing the head of 'Uthmân and he said:

«يَابُنَيَّةُ! أَحْسِنِي إِلَى أَبِي عَبْدِاللهِ، فَإِنَّهُ أَشْبَهُ أَصْحَابِي بِي خُلُقاً»

"O my daughter, take good care of Abu 'Abdullâh, for he is the closest of my companions to me in attitude."[2]

Umm Jameel bint Harb and her husband Abu Lahab thought that by divorcing Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthoom that they would deal a harsh blow to the family of Muhammad ﷺ or at least weaken them, but Allâh chose good for Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthoom, which caused a great deal of frustration and anger for Umm Jameel and Abu Lahab, and they did not achieve anything. Thus Allâh sufficed the household of the Prophet ﷺ against their evil.

And the Command of Allâh is a decree determined.

His persecution and migration to Abyssinia

Allâh's decree that all are to be tested is applied constantly to individuals, communities, peoples and nations. This applied to the Sahâbah too, and they underwent trials and tribulations that would shake the foundations of lofty mountains. They spent their wealth and shed their blood for the sake of Allâh, and this suffering became as severe as Allâh willed that it should. The

---

[1] *Ansâb al-Ashrâf*, p. 89

[2] Narrated by at-Tabarâni and the men of its isnâd are thiqât (trustworthy), as stated by al-Haythami. *Al-Majma'* no. 14500 (9/81)

prominent Muslims were not spared these trials. 'Uthmân was persecuted and tortured for the sake of Allâh at the hands of his paternal uncle al-Hakam ibn Abi'l-'Aas ibn Umayyah who caught him and tied him up, and said: "Will you turn away from the religion of your forefathers for a new religion? By Allâh, I will not let you go until you give up this religion." 'Uthmân ﷺ said: "By Allâh, I will never give it up or leave it." When al-Hakam saw his steadfastness in adhering to his religion, he let him go.[1]

The persecution intensified and affected all the Muslims, to such an extent that Yâsir and his wife Sumayyah were killed. The Prophet ﷺ was deeply grieved, and wondered where could the Muslims go? Then the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ thought of Abyssinia and said to the Muslims: "Why don't you go to Abyssinia, for in (that land) there is a righteous king in whose land no one is wronged."[2]

The migration (hijrah) began, and the Prophet ﷺ was saddened to see groups of believers sneaking out of Makkah[3] and travelling by sea. Some left riding, and others left on foot, and they continued marching until they reached the coast of the Red Sea. Then they appointed 'Uthmân ibn Maz'oon as their leader and by the grace of Allâh they found two ships on which they embarked in return for half a dinar for each person. Quraysh found out about that and they set off in hot pursuit, but when they reached the coast, the two ships had already set sail.[4]

Among those who migrated during the first and second migration to Abyssinia was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, and on both occasions he was accompanied by his wife Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. They arrived in Abyssinia in Rajab in the fifth year after the Prophet's mission began, and they found safety, security and freedom of worship.

[1] *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân*, p. 22

[2] *al-Hijrah fi'l-Qur'ân il-Kareem*, p. 290; *al-Seerah al-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 1/413

[3] *Dima' 'ala Qamees 'Uthmân*, p. 15; *al-Tabaqât*, 1/204

[4] *at-Tabaqât*, 1/204; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 2/69

The Qur'ân speaks of the migration of the early Muslims to Abyssinia, as Allâh says:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا۟ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"And as for those who emigrated for the Cause of Allâh, after they had been wronged, We will certainly give them goodly residence in this world, but indeed the reward of the Hereafter will be greater; if they but knew!" (*Al-Nahl* 16:41)

al-Qurtubi (may Allâh have mercy on him) quoted Qatâdah (may Allâh have mercy on him) as saying: What is referred to here is the companions of Muhammad ﷺ, who were oppressed by the mushrikeen in Makkah and expelled, until a group of them migrated to Abyssinia, then Allah granted them a place to which to migrate (i.e., Madînah) and granted them supporters from among the believers.[1]

And Allâh says:

﴿قُلْ يَٰعِبَادِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۗ وَأَرْضُ ٱللَّهِ وَٰسِعَةٌ ۗ إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O My slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh – Islamic Monotheism), fear your Lord (Allâh) and keep your duty to Him. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world, and Allâh's earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allâh at a place, then go to another)! Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning" (*Al-Zumar* 39:10)

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: This refers to Ja'far ibn Abi Tâlib and those who went with him to Abyssinia.[2]

'Uthmân ﷺ benefited from this migration, as he gained

[1] *al-Jâmi' li Ahkâm al-Qur'ân* by al-Qurtubi, 10/107

[2] op. cit., 15/240

experience and learned lessons that would stand him in good stead later in his blessed life. Among the most important of these lessons were the following:

1- The steadfastness of the believers in adhering to their faith after the infliction of all kinds of persecution and torture by the misguided evildoers is a sign of their sincere faith and high spiritual standing, as their peace of mind, contentment, and hope for the pleasure of Allâh was far greater than the torture, deprivation and pain that affected their bodies, because what matters most for the sincere believers and dâ'iyahs is their spiritual aspirations, not their physical needs. So they hastened to fulfil the needs of their souls and paid less attention to their bodies' needs for rest, fulfilment and pleasure. Thus the call to Allâh prevailed and the masses were freed from darkness and ignorance.[1]

2- 'Uthmân ﷺ learned from the Prophet ﷺ compassion towards the ummah. His compassion was demonstrated when he became caliph and before that, when he lived in Madînah at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them). He saw with his own eyes the compassion of the Prophet ﷺ towards his companions and his deep concern to guarantee their safety and security. Hence he suggested to them that they go to that just king in whose land no one was oppressed. And it turned out to be as he ﷺ had said; they were safe and free to practise their religion, and they stayed there on the best terms.[2] The Prophet ﷺ is the one who suggested Abyssinia; he is the one who chose a safe place for his community and his message, so that it was protected from being wiped out. This is how the Prophet ﷺ trained Muslim leaders in every era to plan wisely and with farsightedness in order to protect the call of Islam and the callers (dâ'iyahs), and to look for a safe land to be a provisional capital for the call and a centre from which it could operate lest the main centre be exposed to danger, attacked or

[1] *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by Dr. Mustafa al-Sibâ'i, p. 57
[2] *al-Hijrah fi'l-Qur'ân il-Kareem*, p. 312

destroyed. The dâ'iyahs are a true asset and all efforts should be focused on protecting them, without any negligence or risks that could jeopardize their lives or their safety. One Muslim is equivalent to an earthful of people who are outside of the religion of Allâh and do not believe in Tawheed.[1]

3- 'Uthmân ﷺ learned from the Prophet's advice to migrate to Abyssinia that risks should be undertaken by those who are close to the leader, his family and relatives; the notion that the leader's relatives should be kept away from danger and that those who are not related to the leader or are not of high status should be sent to confront danger is far removed from the way of the Prophet ﷺ.[2] Hence when 'Uthmân became caliph, his relatives were in the forefront of the army. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi Sarh led the conquests in Africa, and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir led the conquests in the east. He commanded Mu'âwiyah to travel by sea, accompanied by his wife, and to be at the head of the army. This will be discussed in further detail below when we speak of the conquests.

4- 'Uthmân ﷺ was the first one of this ummah to migrate to Abyssinia with his family.[3] The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«صَحِبَهُمَا اللهُ، إِنَّ عُثْمَانَ لَأَوَّلُ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَى اللهِ بِأَهْلِهِ بَعْدَ لُوطٍ»

"May Allâh be with them. 'Uthmân is the first one to migrate with his family for the sake of Allâh after Loot."[4]

When there was a rumour that the people of Makkah had become Muslim, news of that reached the emigrants in Abyssinia, so they came back, but when they drew close to Makkah, they heard that what was being said about the people of Makkah becoming Muslim was false. But they entered the city under the protection of some of the people of Makkah. Among those who returned was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and his wife Ruqayyah (may

---

[1] *at-Tarbiyah al-Qiyâdiyyah* by Muneer al-Ghadbân, 1/333

[2] op. cit.; *al-Seerah al-Nabawiyyah*, 1/348

[3] *as-Sawâ'iq al-Mursalah*, 1/314

[4] *al-Ma'rifah wa'l-Tareekh*, 3/268; its isnâd is da'eef

Allâh be pleased with them both).[1] He settled there until Allâh granted permission to migrate to Madînah. From the day he became Muslim, 'Uthmân stayed close to the Prophet ﷺ wherever he was, and he did not leave him except when he migrated with his permission, or went on a mission for which he appointed him, which no one else could do. In staying close to the Prophet ﷺ he was like all of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. 'Uthmân had a strong connection to the message of Islam from the first year, and he did not miss any event in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, public or private, nor did he miss any event in the reigns of the first two caliphs; or in other words, he did not miss anything that had to do with the laying of foundations for the Islamic state.[2]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 1/402

[2] op. cit., p. 78

'Uthmân ﷺ and the Holy Qur'ân

The method by means of which 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and all the noble Sahâbah were educated was the Holy Qur'ân which was revealed from the Lord of the Worlds. It was the only source of guidance to be accepted. The Prophet ﷺ was keen to ensure that the Muslims acquired their concepts from one source only. The Holy Qur'ân alone was to be the methodology and focal point on which the Muslim individual, family and society were to be raised. The verses which 'Uthmân heard directly from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ played a role in the formation of his Islamic personality. They purified his heart and soul and influenced him, and he became a new man, with new values, emotions, aims, behaviour and aspirations.[1]

'Uthmân ﷺ was deeply attached to the Holy Qur'ân. Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Sulami narrated how he learned it from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and his words indicate how greatly he loved to live with the Book of Allâh. It was narrated that 'Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Sulami said: Those who taught us the Qur'ân - such as 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood and others - *told us that when they learned ten verses from the Prophet* ﷺ, they would not go beyond them until they had learned the

[1] *An-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by al-Sallâbi, 1/145

knowledge contained in them and how to apply it in deed. They said: So we learned the Qur'ân and knowledge and its application together. Hence they would spend a while to memorize a soorah.[1] Allâh says:

﴿كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ﴾

"(This is) a Book (the Qur'ân) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember" (*Sâd* 38:29)

'Uthmân ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«خَيرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ القُرآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ»

"The best of you are those who learn the Qur'ân and teach it."[2]

'Uthmân recited the entire Qur'ân back to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ before he died. Among the most famous of 'Uthmân's students in learning Qur'ân were Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Sulami, al-Mugheerah ibn Abi Shihâb, Abu'l-Aswad and Zurr ibn Hubaysh.[3]

History has recorded for us some of the things that 'Uthmân ﷺ said about the Holy Qur'ân. He said:

"If our hearts were pure, we would never have our fill of the words of Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted."[4]

"I would not like a day to come when I do not look in the Covenant of Allâh (i.e., the Mus-haf)."[5]

"Three worldly things have been made dear to me: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and reading Qur'ân."[6]

---

[1] *al-Fatâwa*, 13/177

[2] al-Bukhâri, *Fadâ'il al-Qur'ân*, no. 5027

[3] *Tareekh al-Islam, 'Ahd al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by al-Dhahabi, p. 467

[4] *al-Fatâwa*, 11/122; *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/225

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/225; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 275

[6] *Irshâd al-'Ibâd li Isti'dâd li Yawm il-Ma'âd*, p. 88

"There are four things which are outwardly virtues, but in reality are obligations: mixing with righteous people is a virtue, and following their example is a duty; reading Qur'ân is a virtue and acting upon it is a duty; visiting the graves is a virtue and preparing for death is a duty; and visiting the sick person is a virtue and asking him to make a will is a duty."[1]

"Ten things are the greatest waste of time: a scholar whom no one asks about; knowledge that is not acted upon; sound advice that is not accepted; a weapon that is not used; a Masjid that is not prayed in; a Mus-haf that is not read from; wealth from which nothing is spent (in charity); a horse that is not ridden; knowledge of asceticism in the heart of one who is seeking worldly gain; and a long life in which no preparation is made for the journey (into the Hereafter)."[2]

'Uthmân ﷺ was *hafiz* of Qur'ân, and he read Qur'ân all the time. He was asked about that and he said: "It is blessed and was brought by a blessed one."[3] When 'Uthmân died, his Mus-haf was worn out because he had read from it so much.[4]

The wife of 'Uthmân said on the day when he was besieged: "Either kill him or leave him alone, for by Allâh, he would recite the whole Qur'ân in one rak'ah when praying qiyâm al-layl."[5]

The words of Allâh -

﴿أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَٰنِتٌ ءَانَآءَ ٱلَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَآئِمًا يَحْذَرُ ٱلْأَخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُواْ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِۦۗ
قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِى ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُوْلُواْ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ﴾

"Is one who is obedient to Allâh, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)?

---

[1] op. cit., p. 90; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm,* p. 278

[2] *Irshâd al-'Ibâd,* p. 91; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm,* p. 278

[3] *al-Bayân wa'l-Tabyân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân,* 3/177; *Farâ'id al-Kalâm,* p. 273

[4] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/225

[5] *al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah wa'l-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah,* p. 397

Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is only men of understanding who will remember (i.e. get a lesson from Allâh's Signs and Verses)" (*Az-Zumar* 39:9) - were fulfilled in him.

'Uthmân immersed himself in the principles of Islam and studied at the hands of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Through the Qur'ân, 'Uthmân came to know Who is the God Who must be worshipped. The Prophet ﷺ instilled in his heart the meanings of these sublime verses, for he was keen to teach his companions the correct concept of their Lord and His rights over them, knowing that this concept would generate certainty and faith when their souls were purified and their nature (fitrah) became sound. 'Uthmân's view of Allâh, the universe, life, Paradise, Hell, the divine will and decree, the true nature of man and man's struggle with the Shaytân were all based on the Holy Qur'ân and the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ.

Allâh is above having any shortcomings; His are the attributes of infinite perfection. He is One, with no partner or associate, and He has no wife or child. He, may He be glorified, has defined this concept of *'uboodiyyah* (complete servitude to Allâh) and Tawheed in the Holy Qur'ân.[1]

'Uthmân's view of the universe was based on the verses in which Allâh says:

﴿قُلْ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُۥٓ أَندَادًا
ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ مِن فَوْقِهَا وَبَارَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَا أَقْوَاتَهَا
فِي أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَاءً لِّلسَّائِلِينَ ۝ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ
ائْتِيَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ ۝ فَقَضَاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ
وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ أَمْرَهَا وَزَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَحِفْظًا ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ
الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ﴾

[1] *Manhaj ar-Rasool fi Gharas ar-Rooh al-Jihâdiyyah*, p. 10-16

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) : Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days? And you set up rivals (in worship) with Him? That is the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists). He placed therein (i.e. the earth) firm mountains from above it, and He blessed it, and measured therein its sustenance (for its dwellers) in four Days equal (i.e. all these four 'days' were equal in the length of time) for all those who ask (about its creation).. Then He rose over (Istawa) towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: 'Come both of you willingly or unwillingly.' They both said: 'We come willingly.' Then He completed and finished from their creation (as) seven heavens in two Days and He made in each heaven its affair. And We adorned the nearest (lowest) heaven with lamps (stars) to be an adornment as well as to guard (from the devils by using them as missiles against the devils). Such is the Decree of Him, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower" (*Fussilat* 41:9-12)

As for this life, no matter how long it lasts, it will inevitably come to an end, and no matter how great its conveniences and luxuries, they are in fact insignificant. Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ
مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ ٱلْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَٱزَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ
أَهْلُهَآ أَنَّهُمْ قَٰدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَآ أَتَىٰهَآ أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَٰهَا حَصِيدًا
كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِٱلْأَمْسِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

"Verily, the likeness of (this) worldly life is as the water (rain) which We send down from the sky; so by it arises the intermingled produce of the earth of which men and cattle eat: until when the earth is clad in its adornments and is beautified, and its people think that they have all the powers of disposal over it, Our Command reaches it by night or by day and We make it like a clean-mown harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday! Thus do We explain the Ayât in detail for the people who reflect" (*Yoonus* 10:24)

'Uthmân's view of Paradise was derived from the verses which describe it, and this concept became a deterrent which prevented him from going astray from the laws of Allâh. Anyone who studies the life of 'Uthmân will see how clear the idea of meeting Allâh was in his mind, and how greatly he feared the wrath and punishment of Allâh. We will see this in the pages of this book, in sha Allâh.

His concept of the Divine will and decree was derived from the Book of Allâh and the teachings of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This concept was firmly entrenched in his heart, and he understood its different categories as mentioned in the Book of Allâh. He was certain that the knowledge of Allâh encompasses all things:

﴿وَمَا تَكُونُ فِي شَأْنٍ وَمَا تَتْلُوا مِنْهُ مِن قُرْءَانٍ وَلَا تَعْمَلُونَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ إِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُودًا إِذْ تُفِيضُونَ فِيهِ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَآ أَصْغَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَآ أَكْبَرَ إِلَّا فِي كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

"Neither you (O Muhammad) do any deed nor recite any portion of the Qur'ân, nor you (O mankind) do any deed (good or evil), but We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it. And nothing is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant) on the earth or in the heaven. Not what is less than that or what is greater than that but is (written) in a Clear Record" (*Yoonus* 10:61)

And he was certain that Allâh has decreed everything that is to be:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَءَاثَٰرَهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَٰهُ فِيٓ إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

"Verily, We give life to the dead, and We record that which they

send before (them), and their traces[1] *and all things We have recorded with numbers (as a record) in a Clear Book"* (*Ya-Seen* 36:12)

The will of Allâh is ever executed and His power is absolute:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَكَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُ مِن شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا﴾

"Have they not travelled in the land, and seen what was the end of those before them – though they were superior to them in power? Allâh is not such that anything in the heavens or in the earth escapes Him. Verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Omnipotent" (*Fâtir* 35:44)

And Allâh is the Creator of all things:

﴿ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ﴾

"Such is Allâh, your Lord! Lâ Ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the Wakeel (Trustee, Disposer of affairs or Guardian) over all things" (*Al-An'âm* 6:102)

This correct understanding and deep conviction of the reality of the Divine will and decree bore many fruits which were apparent in his life, as we shall in this book. From the Holy Qur'ân he understood the reality of his own self and of all men. He knew that man's essence went back to two origins: his ancient origin when he was first created from clay, when he was formed and the

[1] Traces: Their footsteps and walking on the earth with their legs to the mosques for the five compulsory congregational prayers, *Jihâd* (holy fighting in Allâh's Cause) and all other good and evil they did, and that which they leave behind.

soul was breathed into him, and his recent origin when he was created from a drop of sperm. Allâh says:

﴿ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُۥ ۖ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنِ مِن طِينٍ ۝ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ
نَسْلَهُۥ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ ۝ ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِهِۦ ۖ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ
ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

"Who made everything He has created good and He began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his offspring from semen of despised water (male and female sexual discharge). Then He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him the soul (created by Allâh for that person); and He gave you hearing (ears), sight (eyes) and hearts. Little is the thanks you give!" (*As-Sajdah* 32:7-9)

He understood that Allâh had created man with His own hand, and honoured him with a beautiful form and an upright posture. He had blessed him with wisdom, logic and discernment, and subjugated to him all that is in the heavens and on earth. Allâh favoured man over much of His creation, and honoured him by sending the Messengers to him. The most wondrous manifestation of this divine honour towards man was that He made man qualified to receive His love and good pleasure, which could be attained by following the Prophet ﷺ who called man to Islam so that they might live a good life in this world and attain eternal bliss in the Hereafter. Allâh says:

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

"Whoever works righteousness – whether male or female – while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter)" (*An-Nahl* 16:97)

From the Qur'ân, 'Uthmân understood the true nature of the struggle between man and the Shaytân. He knew that this enemy comes to man from before and behind, from his right and from his left, and whispers to him, tempting him to commit sin, and stirring up his desires. He used to seek the help of Allâh against his enemy Iblees and he prevailed over him throughout his life.

He learned from the story of Adam with the Shaytân, as mentioned in the Qur'ân, that Adam was the origin of mankind, and that the essence of Islam is absolute obedience to Allâh, and that man is vulnerable to falling into sin. From the story of Adam's sin he learned the necessity of putting one's trust in Allâh, the importance of repentance and praying for forgiveness in the life of the believer, the necessity of keeping away from envy and arrogance, and the importance of speaking in the best manner to one's companions, because Allâh says:

﴿وَقُل لِّعِبَادِى يَقُولُوا۟ ٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ كَانَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا﴾

"And say to My slaves (i.e. the true believers of Islamic Monotheism) that they should (only) say those words that are the best. (Because) Shaytân (Satan) verily, sows a state of conflict and disagreements among them. Surely, Shaytân (Satan) is to man a plain enemy" [Al-Isra' 17:53]

The Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, honoured 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân with Islam, and he lived by it and strove to spread its message. He learned its major and minor issues from the Book of Allâh and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, and he became one of the leaders of Islam who guided the people and whose words and deeds were taken as an example in this life. We should not forget that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was one of the scribes who wrote down the Revelation for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

His staying close to the Prophet ﷺ in Madînah

The strongest factor that shaped 'Uthmân's character, brought out his talents and potentials and purified his soul was his keeping company with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and studying at his hands. 'Uthmân ؓ stayed close to the Messenger ﷺ in Makkah after he became Muslim, and he stayed close to him in Madînah after he migrated there. 'Uthmân devoted himself to studying various branches of knowledge at the hands of the teacher and guide of mankind who had been taught by his Lord in the best manner. He was eager to learn the Holy Qur'ân and the Sunnah from the leader of all of mankind.

'Uthmân tells us how he stayed close to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, as he said: Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, sent Muhammad with the truth and revealed the Book to him, and I was one of those who responded to Allâh and His Messenger and believed. I made the two early migrations and I became the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and I received guidance directly from him.[1] 'Uthmân ؓ was trained according to the Qur'ânic method and the one who taught him was the Messenger

[1] *Fadâ'il as-Sahâbah* by Abu 'Abd-Allâh Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 1/597. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

of Allâh ﷺ. The starting point in 'Uthmân's education came when he met the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and underwent a sudden and marvellous transformation as soon as he met the Prophet ﷺ, coming forth from darkness into light, acquiring faith and shunning *kufr*. He was able to bear hardships for the sake of his new religion and its pure beliefs. The personality of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the main attraction to Islam, for he possessed the ability to attract and influence others. Allâh had prepared him and moulded him and made him the most perfect human being in the history of the world. Greatness is always loved and admired by people; admirers gather around it and remain attached to it, because of that love and admiration. But in the case of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, added to that greatness was the fact that he was the Messenger of Allâh, the one who received revelation from Allâh and conveyed it to mankind. This added a further dimension to the impact on the believers' feelings towards him. He was not loved only for himself as great men are loved, but also for that divine connection. For when a believer was in the presence of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he was also in the presence of Divine revelation. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was both a great human being and a great Messenger; these two qualities ultimately combined and became one, with no distinction between them. Thus the believer's love for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was love for the Messenger as a human being and for the human being as a Messenger. Love for Allâh was connected to love for His Messenger, and the two joined together in the believer's heart, becoming the focal point of all his emotions and the basis for his behaviour and attitudes.

This love that motivated the first generation of the Sahâbah is the focus and starting point of Islamic personal development. Through the blessing of keeping company with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and learning at his hands, 'Uthmân ؓ and the Sahâbah attained a high level of faith. 'Uthmân ؓ studied at the hands of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and learned from him the Qur'ân and Sunnah, the rules of recitation (tilâwah) and how souls are purified. Allâh says:

﴿قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ تَعَالَوْا۟ إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۭ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِۦ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُولُوا۟ ٱشْهَدُوا۟ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allāh." Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (*Aal 'Imrân* 3:64)

He was keen to immerse himself in the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ and to stay close to him during times of war and of peace. In the coming pages we will see, in sha Allâh, his attitude concerning the fields of jihad, politics, social life and economics with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in the Madeenan period.

'Uthmân and *jihad* with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

After the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had settled in Madînah he started establishing the foundations of the Islamic state he began to create bonds of brotherhood between the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr*. 'Uthmân's "brother" was Aws ibn Thâbit.[1] Then the Prophet ﷺ established his mosque and drew up a treaty with the Jews, and he started to send out military expeditions and paid attention to laying down the economic and educational foundations of the new society. 'Uthmân ﷺ was one of the pillars of the Islamic state, and he did not withhold any advice, opinion or wealth. He was also present at every major event except the battle of Badr.[2]

'Uthmân and the battle of Badr

When the Muslims went out to fight the battle of Badr, 'Uthmân's wife, Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of

[1] *Al-Ameen Dhu'n-Noorayn* by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 40

[2] *Manhaj at-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah* by Ahmad Qutub, p. 34, 35

Allâh ﷺ, was sick with the measles and was confined to her bed at the time when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ called on the Muslims to intercept the caravan of Quraysh. 'Uthmân ﷺ hastened to go out with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, but he received orders to stay with Ruqayyah ﷺ and nurse her; he obeyed willingly and stayed with his wife Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. When her sickness grew worse and death approached, as Ruqayyah breathed her last she was longing to see her father who had gone out to Badr and her sister Zaynab who was still in Makkah. 'Uthmân ﷺ looked at her through his tears, his heart breaking with sorrow.[1] She departed this life bearing witness that there is no god but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, but she did not get to see her father the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, because he was in Badr with his noble companions, striving to make the word of Allâh supreme, and he did not attend her burial. Ruqayyah was prepared for burial and her body was brought, with her grieving husband walking behind it. When the funeral reached al-Baqee', Ruqayyah was buried there and the attendants wept and levelled the soil over the grave of Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. As they were returning, Yazeed ibn Hârithah came, riding the camel of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, bringing good news that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was safe and sound, and the mushrikeen had been killed and their heroes captured. The Muslims of Madînah received this news with rejoicing, celebrating the victory that Allâh had granted to His believing slaves, but amidst the rejoicing 'Uthmân could not conceal his sorrow at the loss of Ruqayyah ﷺ. After the Messenger ﷺ returned, he learned of the death of Ruqayyah ﷺ, and he went out to al-Baqee' and stood over the grave of his daughter and prayed for forgiveness for her.[2]

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân did not stay behind from Badr because of any shortcoming or because he wanted to avoid the battle, as is

---

[1] *Nisa' Ahl al-Bayt* by Ahmad Khaleel Jumu'ah, p. 491-504

[2] *Dima' 'ala Qamees 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 20

claimed by those followers of whims and desires who attack him because of his absence from Badr. He did not intend to go against the Messenger ﷺ, because the virtue attained by those who were present at Badr was due to their obeying the Messenger ﷺ and following him. 'Uthmân went out with the others who went out with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, but he ﷺ sent him back to take care of his daughter. Thus he was doing the most important duty of obeying the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who asked him to stay behind. The Prophet ﷺ gave him a share of the booty and reward, so he had a share in the booty and attained the virtue and reward of obeying and submitting to Allâh and His Messenger.[1]

It was narrated that 'Uthmân ibn 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mawhab said: A man came from Egypt to perform pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, and he said: O Ibn 'Umar, I am going to ask you about something, so tell me, for I adjure you by Allâh and the sanctity of this House: do you know that 'Uthmân was absent from Badr and did not witness it? He said: Yes, but his absence from Badr was because he was married to the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and she fell sick, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him:

«لَكَ أَجْرُ رَجُلٍ شَهِدَ بَدْرًا وَسَهْمُهُ»

"You will have the reward and the share of booty of a man who was present at Badr."[2]

It was narrated from Abu Wâ'il that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ said: "On the day of Badr, I stayed behind to look after the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me a share (of the booty)." Zâ'idah said in his hadeeth: Whoever was given a share of the booty by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was regarded as having been there.[3] So 'Uthmân was regarded as one of the people of Badr, by consensus.[4]

---

[1] *Kitâb al-Imâmah wa'l-Radd 'ala al-Râfidah* by al-Asbahâni, p. 302

[2] *al-Bukhâri, no. 3698 at-Tirmidhi 3706*

[3] *al-Imâmah wa'l-Radd 'ala al-Râfidah* by al-Asbahâni, p. 304

[4] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 47

'Uthmân and the battle of Uhud

At the battle of Uhud, Allâh ﷻ granted victory to the Muslims at the beginning of the battle, and the Muslims began to wield their swords against the mushrikeen, whose defeat appeared imminent. The standard-bearers of the mushrikeen were killed, one by one, and no one could get near to retrieve the banner. The mushrikeen began to flee and the women who had been singing and banging the drums began to scream; they threw down their drums and fled towards the mountain, baring their calves. But suddenly the balance tipped, because of the archers whom the Prophet ﷺ had commanded to stay in their position on the side of the mountain and not to move no matter what the outcome of the battle was. All but a few of them deserted their posts and came down to the field of battle seeking booty, when they saw the Muslims gathering it. Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, who was the leader of the cavalry of Quraysh, took this opportunity when he saw that the mountain was bare of archers except a few. He, along with 'Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl, launched a cavalry attack and killed the remaining archers, including their leader 'Abd-Allâh ibn Jubayr ﷺ, who had remained at his post with a small group. Whilst the Muslims were distracted and collecting the booty, Khâlid and those who were with him attacked them from all sides and started killing them. The Muslims panicked and some of them, including 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, fled to a place near Madînah, and they did not return until the fighting stopped. Another group became confused when they heard that the Prophet ﷺ had been killed, and a third group stood firm with the Prophet ﷺ. Concerning the group that fled, Allâh revealed concerning them Qur'ân that will be recited until the Day of Resurrection. Allâh said:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا ٱسْتَزَلَّهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ﴾

"Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met (i.e. the battle of Uhud), it was Shaytân (Satan) who caused them to backslide (run away from the battlefield) because of some (sins)

they had earned. But Allâh, indeed, has forgiven them. Surely, Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing" (*Aal 'Imrân* 3:155)

But those who cannot see anything but that which is dictated to them by their whims and desires never quote the names of those who retreated except 'Uthmân ﷺ. They accuse him and not the other Sahâbah who also retreated. Should he have stayed on his own? If he had done that he would have exposed himself to danger.[1] After Allâh forgave those who retreated, the ruling is very clear and there is no confusion or ambiguity. There is no room for blaming 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ after that. It is enough to know that Allâh has forgiven him, as is stated in the text of the Qur'ân. His striving in jihad throughout his life is witness to his bravery.

The campaign of Ghatafân (Dhu Imr)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mobilized the Muslims and set out with four hundred men and a number of horses, leaving 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ in charge in Madînah. They captured a (mushrik) man in Dhu'l-Qussah whose name was Jabbâr, from Banu Tha'labah. He was taken to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and he told him some information about his people, and said: "They will never meet you in battle; when they heard that you were coming, they fled to the mountaintops. I will go with you." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ called him to Islam and he became Muslim, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made him the brother of Bilâl. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not meet anyone in battle, then he came back to Madînah with no fighting having taken place. He was absent for eleven days.[2]

The campaign of Dhât al-Riqâ'

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard that a group from Ghatafân, from (the tribes of) Tha'labah and Anmâr, wanted to attack Madînah, so he set out with four hundred of his companions until

---

[1] *al-Ameen Dhu'n-Nooaryan* by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 49

[2] *al-Rawd al-Anf*, 3/137; *al-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 2/34, 35

he reached Sirâr. Before he left, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ appointed 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân in charge of Madînah. The Muslims encountered a huge group from Ghatafân and the people drew close but no fighting occurred between them. The people were afraid of one another, until the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ led the people in offering the fear prayer, then he departed with the people. He was away from Madînah for fifteen days.[1]

Bay'at al-Radwân

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ halted at al-Hudaybiyah, he deemed it essential to send a representative to Quraysh, to tell them of his peaceful intentions and that he had no desire to fight, and he wanted to respect the holy places; he wanted to perform 'Umrah and then return to Madînah. The man chosen to be the representative of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to Quraysh was Kharâsh ibn Umayyah al-Khuzâ'i, whom he mounted on a camel called al-Tha'lab. When he entered Makkah, Quraysh killed the camel and they wanted to kill Kharâsh too, but the Ahâbeesh stopped them. Kharâsh ibn Umayyah came back to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and told him what Quraysh had done. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ wanted to send another envoy to tell Quraysh of the message of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and at first he chose 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ.[2] But 'Umar apologized to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said that he preferred not to go, and he suggested to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that he send 'Uthmân instead of him.[3] He clearly explained the reason for that, which is that it is essential for anyone who mixes with the enemy to have protection. As no such protection was available to 'Umar, he suggested to the Prophet ﷺ that he send 'Uthmân ﷺ, because he had a tribe who could protect him from the harm of the mushrikeen until he had conveyed the message of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.[4] He said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ:

---

[1] *al-Ameen Dhu'n-Noorayn* by Muhammad Shâkir, p. 52, 53

[2] *Ghazwat al-Hudaybiyah* by Abu Fâris, p. 83

[3] *al-Maghâzi* by Muhammad 'Umar al-Wâqidi, 2/600

[4] *al-Maghâzi* by Muhammad 'Umar al-Wâqidi, 2/600

"I fear for myself with regard to Quraysh, for they know how hostile I am towards them, and there is no one there from Banu 'Udayy who could protect me. But if you want, O Messenger of Allâh, I will go and meet them."[1]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not say anything, and 'Umar said: "But I shall tell you, O Messenger of Allâh, of a man who is held in high esteem in Makkah and who has more relatives and is better protected: 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ called 'Uthmân ؓ and said: "Go to Quraysh and tell them that we have not come to fight, rather we have only come as visitors to this House, respecting its sanctity. We have our sacrificial animals with us; we will slaughter them and depart." 'Uthmân set out and came to Baldah (a place near Makkah) where he found Quraysh. They said: "Where are you going?" He said: "The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ has sent me to you, to call you to Allâh and to Islam, and to enter the religion of Allâh, for Allâh will make His religion prevail and will grant victory to His Prophet. Your other option is to leave him alone and let other people fight him, then if they prevail over Muhammad, that is what you want, but if Muhammad prevails then you will have the choice of entering what the people have entered or of fighting him when your power is still intact. The war has destroyed you and taken the best of your leaders." 'Uthmân kept talking and telling them things they did not want to hear, and they said: "We have heard what you say, but it will never happen. He will never enter upon us by force. Go back to your companion and tell him that he is not allowed to come to us." Abân ibn Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas stood up and welcomed him and offered him protection and said: "I think you will get what you want." Then he dismounted from the horse that he was riding, and he made 'Uthmân sit in the saddle and he rode behind him, and 'Uthmân entered Makkah and went to each leader in turn: Abu Sufyân ibn Harb, Safwân ibn Umayyah and others whom he had met at Baldah, and others whom he met in Makkah. They all kept telling him, "Muhammad will never enter

[1] *al-Maghâzi* by Muhammad 'Umar al-Wâqidi, 2/600

upon us."[1] The mushrikoon suggested to 'Uthmân ﷺ that he perform tawâf around the Ka'bah but he refused.[2] 'Uthmân conveyed the message of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to the weak and oppressed of Makkah and gave them the glad tidings that relief was close at hand.[3] And he took a verbal message back from them to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in which they said: "Convey our salâm to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, for the One Who enabled him to camp at al-Hudaybiyah is able to cause him to enter the centre of Makkah.[4]

There were rumours among the Muslims that 'Uthmân had been killed, then the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ called his companions to swear allegiance to him, pledging to fight the mushrikeen. The Sahâbah responded, swearing loyalty unto death[5] , except for al-Jadd ibn Qays, who was a hypocrite.[6] According to another report, the pledge was to remain steadfast[7] , and according to yet another report it was a pledge not to flee.[8] There is no contradiction here, because a pledge to remain loyal unto death means a pledge to remain steadfast and not flee.[9] The first one to make this pledge was Abu Sinân 'Abd-Allâh ibn Wahb al-Asadi.[10] Then the rest of the people came forth and made the same pledge as he had.[11] Salamah ibn al-Akwa' swore allegiance three times: with the first group of people, in the middle and with the last group.[12] The Prophet ﷺ said of his

---

[1] *Zâd al-Ma'âd*, 3/290; *al-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 3/344

[2] *Zâd al-Ma'âd*, 3/290

[3] *Zâd al-Ma'âd*, 3/290

[4] *Ghazwat al-Hudaybiyah* by Abu Fâris, p. 85

[5] *al-Bukhâri*, *hadeeth* no. 4169

[6] *al-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah fi Daw' al-Masâdir al-Asliyyah*, p. 486

[7] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 4169

[8] *Muslim, no. 1856*

[9] *al-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah fi Daw' an-Masâdir al-Asliyyah*, p. 486

[10] ibid.

[11] ibid.

[12] *Zâd al-Ma'âd*, 3/291

right hand, "This is the hand of 'Uthmân", and he put it in his other hand.[1] The number of Sahâbah from whom the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ accepted the oath of allegiance beneath the tree was one thousand and four hundred.[2] The Qur'ân speaks of the people who gave the oath of allegiance (Bay'at al-Radwân), and their virtue is mentioned in many Qur'ânic verses and ahâdeeth, such as the following:

1 - Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ يَدُ ٱللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَن نَّكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَٰهَدَ عَلَيْهُ ٱللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾

"Verily, those who give Bay'ah (pledge) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) they are giving Bay'ah (pledge) to Allâh. The Hand of Allâh is over their hands. Then whosoever breaks his pledge, breaks it only to his own harm; and whosoever fulfils what he has covenanted with Allâh, He will bestow on him a great reward" (*Al-Fath* 48:10]

2 - Allâh says:

﴿لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝ لَّقَدْ رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنزَلَ ٱلسَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَٰبَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا﴾

"No blame or sin is there upon the blind, nor is there blame or sin upon the lame, nor is there blame or sin upon the sick (that they go not for fighting). And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), He will admit him to Gardens

[1] *Saheeh al-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah,* p. 404

[2] *Muslim* (1485)

beneath which rivers flow (Paradise); and whosoever turns back, He will punish him with a painful torment. Indeed, Allâh was pleased with the believers when they gave the Bay'ah (pledge) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) under the tree, He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down As-Sakeenah (calmness and tranquillity) upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory" (*Al-Fath* 48:17, 18)

3 - Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh ﷺ said:

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to us on the day of al-Hudaybiyah:

«أَنتمْ خَيرُ أَهْلِ الأَرْضِ»

"You are the best people on earth."

There were one thousand and four hundred of us and if I could see I would show you where the tree stood.[1] This hadeeth clearly speaks of the virtue of those who were present at the tree. At that time there were a number of Muslims in Makkah, Madînah and other places, but some of the Shi'ah take this hadeeth as evidence that 'Ali was better than 'Uthmân because 'Ali was among those to whom these words were addressed, and he was among those who swore allegiance beneath the tree, whereas 'Uthmân was absent that day. But this argument is baseless, because the Prophet ﷺ swore allegiance on 'Uthmân's behalf, so 'Uthmân is equal to them in virtue in this particular case, and the hadeeth is not intended to differentiate between them.[2]

With regard to al-Hudaybiyah, al-Muhibb al-Tabari mentioned a number of qualities that were exclusive to 'Uthmân. For example, he was the only one for whom the hand of the Prophet ﷺ represented his hand, when the Sahâbah swore

[1] *Al-Bukhari* no 4154, *Muslim*, 1856

[2] *Fath al-Bâri*, 7/443

allegiance and 'Uthmân was absent. He was the only one who conveyed the message of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to the Muslim prisoners in Makkah, and the Prophet ﷺ approved of 'Uthmân's refusal to perform tawâf when he sent him with that message.[1] It was narrated from Iyâs ibn Salamah from his father that the Prophet ﷺ swore allegiance on behalf of 'Uthmân, with one hand in the other, and the people said: Congratulations to Abu 'Abd-Allâh; he can perform tawâf around the Ka'bah safely. The Prophet ﷺ: "No matter how long he stays in Makkah, he will not perform tawâf until I do."[2]

'Uthmân was falsely accused of not having sworn allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in Bay'at al-Radwân, when he was absent. This is one of the accusations that were made against 'Uthmân when the turmoil (fitnah) arose which was aimed at destroying the foundations of his caliphate.[3] We will discuss this in further detail below, in sha Allâh. It was narrated that Anas said: When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ enjoined Bay'at al-Radwân, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân had been sent by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to the people of Makkah. The people swore allegiance to him, then he said: " 'Uthmân is doing an errand for Allâh and His Messenger," and he struck the ground with one of his hands. The hand of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that represented 'Uthmân was better than their hands that represented themselves.[4]

Intercession of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân for 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh at the conquest of Makkah

When the conquest of Makkah came, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh hid with 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, who brought him to stand before the Prophet ﷺ. He said: "O Messenger of Allâh, accept the allegiance of 'Abd-Allâh." He raised his head and looked at him three times, refusing each time, but he accepted his

---

[1] *al-Riyâdh an-Nadrah fi Manâqib al-'Asharah*, p. 460, 491

[2] op. cit., p. 491; there is some weakness in its isnâd.

[3] *Siyar as-Salaf al-Sâliheen*, 1/181; its *isnâd* is *da'eef*, but the *hadeeth* is *saheeh*. *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, no. 3702

[4] *as-Saarim al-Maslool 'alaa Shaatami Rasool*, P.109

allegiance after the third time. Then he turned to his companions and said: "Was there not among you a wise man who would get up and deal with this man and kill him, when he saw me withholding my hand and refusing to accept his allegiance?" They said: We did not know, O Messenger of Allâh, what you were thinking of; why didn't you gesture to us with your eyes? He said: "It is not befitting for a Prophet to deceive with his eyes."[1]

According to another report: when the conquest of Makkah came, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ granted safety to the people except four, of whom he said: "Kill them even if you find them clinging to the curtains of the Ka'bah: 'Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khatal, Maqees ibn Habbâbah and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh.[2] 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khatal was caught when he was clinging to the curtains of the Ka'bah; Sa'd ibn Hârith and 'Ammâr raced to kill him, and Sa'd beat 'Ammâr, as he was the younger of the two men, and he killed him. 'Ikrimah travelled by sea and a storm came. The crew of the boat said: "Be sincere towards the Almighty, for your gods cannot avail you anything here." 'Ikrimah said: "By Allâh, if nothing can help me on the sea except sincerity towards the Almighty, then nothing else will help me on land. O Allâh, I promise that if You save me from this predicament, I will go to Muhammad and put my hand in his; I am certain that I will find him forgiving and generous." So he came and became Muslim. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh hid with 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ called the people to swear allegiance, 'Uthmân brought him and made him stand before the Prophet ﷺ, and the rest is as we have mentioned above.[3]

It was narrated that 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Abbâs said: 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh was a scribe for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, then the Shaytân caused him to slip and he went and joined the kuffâr. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered that he be killed on the

[1] *Adwa' al-Bayân fi Tareekh al-Qur'ân* by Sâbir Abu Sulaymân, p. 79

[2] Ibid

[3] op. cit., p. 80

day of the Conquest, but 'Uthmân asked to be allowed to give him protection and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave him permission.[1] Ibn Ishâq mentioned the reason why the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered that Sa'd be killed and why 'Uthmân interceded for him. He said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered that he be killed because he had become Muslim, and he used to write down the Wahy (Revelation) for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, then he apostatized and became a mushrik, and went back to Quraysh. He fled to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, who was his brother through breastfeeding, and he hid him until he brought him to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ after things had calmed down among the people of Makkah, and asked for a pardon for him. Ibn Hishâm said: Then he became Muslim after that, and 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb appointed him for some tasks, as did 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân after him.[2]

The campaign of Tabook

In 9 AH, Heraclius turned his attention towards Arabia, seeking to attack it and absorb it into his empire. He ordered his troops to prepare and await his instructions to advance.. News of that reached the Messenger ﷺ and he told his companions to prepare for jihad. It was a blazing hot summer and the country was suffering drought and hardship. Even though the Muslims could, by their faith, withstand the brutal heat and set out for jihad across the burning sands of the desert, where would they get the equipment that they needed for jihad? The Messenger ﷺ urged them to donate, and each person gave what he could afford. The women brought their jewellery to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and he used it to help prepare the army, but these donations could not help much with the huge requirements of the army. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ looked at the huge ranks of men who were preparing for battle and he said: "Who will equip them and Allâh will forgive him?" No sooner had 'Uthmân heard this

[1] ibid.

[2] *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 4/57, 58

call of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ but he hastened to seek the forgiveness and pleasure of Allâh, and thus this pressing need was met by the generosity of 'Uthmân.[1] He ﷺ supplied the army's every need, down to the last rope and bridle.

Ibn Shihâb az-Zuhri said: 'Uthmân supplied the army of Tabook with nine hundred and forty camels, and sixty horses to bring the number to one thousand. 'Uthmân brought ten thousand dinars to equip the army and placed the money before the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and the Messenger ﷺ began turning it over with his hand, saying:

«مَا ضَرَّ عُثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ الْيَوْمِ»

"No deed can harm 'Uthmân after today" twice.[2]

'Uthmân ﷺ was the one who spent the most on this campaign.[3] 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Habbâb spoke of the spending of 'Uthmân when he said: I was present with the Prophet ﷺ when he was urging the people to spend on the army of Tabook. 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ stood up and said: "O Messenger of Allâh, I pledge to give two hundred camels with their saddles and equipment for the sake of Allâh." Then the Prophet ﷺ urged the people to spend on the army and 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân stood up and said: "O Messenger of Allâh, I pledge to give three hundred camels with their saddles and equipment for the sake of Allâh." I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ coming down from the minbar, saying:

«مَا عَلَى عُثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ هَذِهِ، مَا عَلَى عُثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ هَذِهِ»

"Nothing could harm 'Uthmân, no matter what he does after

[1] *Fath al-Bâri,* 7/67; *Khulafa' al-Rasool,* p. 250; *al-'Asharah al-Mubashsharoona bi'l-Jannah* by Muhammad Sâlih 'Awad, p. 53

[2] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi,* no. 3701; *Saheeh al-Tawtheeq,* p. 26

[3] *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah fi Daw' al-Masâdir al-Asliyyah,* p. 615

this ; nothing could harm 'Uthmân, no matter what he does after this."[1]

It was narrated that 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Samurah ﷺ said: 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ came to the Prophet ﷺ with one thousand dinars in his garment, when the Prophet ﷺ was equipping the army of Tabook, and the Prophet ﷺ started turning the coins over with his hand and saying,

«مَا ضَرَّ عُثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ الْيَوْمِ»

"Nothing could harm 'Uthmân, no matter what he does after this,"[2]

And he repeated it several times.

It seems that he was the only sponsor for this new community. The Messenger ﷺ marched at the head of the army until they reached a place called Tabook, halfway between Madînah and Damascus. There they heard the good news that Heraclius, who had been preparing to march from Damascus, had lost his resolve and had left Damascus, giving up on his desperate plans after hearing that the Prophet ﷺ and his companions had set out to meet him. The army returned with all the equipment that 'Uthmân had supplied to them, but did he take anything back? Not at all, and it was unlikely that he would do such a thing. He remained quick to respond to every gesture of the Prophet ﷺ when he asked anew for the people to spend for the sake of Allâh.[3]

His social life in Madînah

His marriage to Umm Kulthoom in 3 AH

'Umm Kulthoom ﷺ is known by her *kunyah* and her name is

[1] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi,* no. 3700

[2] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi,* no. 3701

[3] *Khulafa' al-Rasool,* p. 138; *al-'Asharah al-Mubashsharoona bi'l-Jannah,* p. 31

not known, except that al-Hâkim narrated from Mus'ab az-Zubayri that her name was Umayyah and that she was older than Fâtimah ﷺ.[1]

Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab said: 'Uthmân's wife Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, died, and the husband of Hafsah bint 'Umar also died. 'Umar came to 'Uthmân and said: Do you want to marry Hafsah? But 'Uthmân had heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ speaking of her, so he did not answer him. 'Umar mentioned that to the Prophet ﷺ and he said: "How about a better idea? I will marry Hafsah, and 'Uthmân can marry someone better than her: Umm Kulthoom."[2]

According to a report by al-Bukhâri, 'Umar said: The husband of Hafsah bint 'Umar, Khunays ibn Hudhâfah al-Suhami, died. He was one of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and he died in Madînah. 'Umar said: I went to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and suggested that he marry Hafsah bint 'Umar. I said: If you wish, I will give Hafsah in marriage to you. He said: I will think about it. A few days passed, then he met me and said: I do not think that I want to get married right now. 'Umar said: Then I met Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq and I said: If you wish, I will give Hafsah bint 'Umar in marriage to you. Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq remained silent and did not give me any answer, and I was more upset about that than I was with 'Uthmân. A few days passed, then the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ proposed marriage to her and I gave her in marriage to him. Abu Bakr met me and said: Perhaps you were upset with me when you offered Hafsah in marriage to me and I did not give you any answer? 'Umar said: Yes. He said: Nothing kept me from answering you when you made that offer except that I knew that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had spoken of her, and I did not want to disclose the secret of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. *If the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had decided not to marry her I would* have accepted her.[3]

---

[1] *ad-Duhah an-Nabawiyyah al-Shareefah,* by Fârooq Hamâdah, p. 45, 46

[2] *Mustadrak al-Hâkim,* 4/49; *al-Âthâr* by Abu Yoosuf, no. 1957

[3] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Nikâh,* no. 5122

The Mother of the Believers 'Aa'ishah ﵂ also spoke of the marriage of Umm Kulthoom to 'Uthmân ﵁. She said: When the Prophet ﷺ arranged the marriage of his daughter Umm Kulthoom, he said to Umm Ayman: "Prepare my daughter Umm Kulthoom for marriage and present her to 'Uthmân, and beat the daff in front of her." She did that and the Prophet ﷺ visited his daughter three days later. He entered upon her and said: "O my daughter, how did you find your husband?" She said: The best of husbands.[1]

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah ﵁ that the Prophet ﷺ stood at the door of the mosque and said:

«يَا عُثْمَانُ! هٰذَا جِبْرِيلُ أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَّ اللهَ قَدْ زَوَّجَكَ أُمَّ كُلْثُومٍ، بِمِثْلِ صَدَاقِ رُقَيَّةَ، عَلَى مِثْلِ صُحْبَتِهَا»

"O 'Uthmân, Jibreel has told me that Allâh wants you to marry Umm Kulthoom for a dowry similar to that of Ruqayyah and to treat her with similar kindness." [2]

That was in Rabee' al-Awwal of 3 AH, and he consummated the marriage with her in Jumâda al-Aakhirah.

The death of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Uthmân ﵁

In Jumâda al-Oola of 4 AH, 'Abd-Allâh, the son of 'Uthmân ﵁ from Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, died when he was six years old. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ offered the funeral prayer for him and his father 'Uthmân went down in his grave to receive his body and lay him to rest.[3] This was a great trial for 'Uthmân, and how many are the trials in the lives of those who call people to Allâh.

---

[1] *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Shahbah, 2/231; *Dima' 'ala Qamees 'Uthmân,* p. 22

[2] *Sunan Ibn Mâjah,* no. 110. Its isnâd includes 'Uthmân ibn Khâlid, who is *da'eef* (weak).

[3] *Al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 2/130; *Dima' 'ala Qamees 'Uthmân,* p. 22

The death of Umm Kulthoom ﵂

Umm Kulthoom stayed with 'Uthmân (may Allâh be pleased with them both) until her death in Sha'bân of 9AH as the result of illness. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ offered the funeral prayer for her and sat by her grave. It was narrated from Anas ibn Mâlik that he saw the Prophet ﷺ sitting by the grave of Umm Kulthoom. He said: I saw his eyes flowing with tears and he said:

«هَلْ فِيكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ لَمْ يُقَارِفِ اللَّيْلَةَ؟» فَقَالَ أَبُو طَلْحَةَ: أَنَا، قَالَ: «فَانْزِلْ فِي قَبْرِهَا»

> *"Is there any man among you who did not do anything last night?" Abu Talhah said: Me. He said: "Go down in her grave."*[1]

It was narrated that Layla bint Qânif al-Thaqafiyyah said: I was among those who washed Umm Kulthoom the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when she died. The first thing that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave to us was the waist-wrapper, then the chemise, then the head cover, then the large wrapper, then after that she was wrapped in another cloth. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was at the door with her shroud, handing the pieces to us one by one.[2]

It was narrated by Ibn Sa'd that 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, al-Fadl ibn 'Abbâs and Usâmah ibn Zayd went down in her grave with Abu Talhah (to lay her to rest), and that the ones who washed her were Asma' bint 'Umays and Safiyyah bint 'Abd al-Muttalib.[3]

'Uthmân ﵁ was deeply grieved by the loss of Umm Kulthoom, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw 'Uthmân walking broken-hearted with signs of grief at his loss on his face. He came to him and said: "If we had a third one, we would

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Janâ'iz,* no. 1342

[2] *Sunan Abi Dawood,* no. 3157

[3] *at-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 8/39; *ad-Duhah an-Nabawiyyah,* p. 48

give her in marriage to you, O 'Uthmân."[1] This is indicative of the love of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for 'Uthmân and of 'Uthmân's loyalty and respect towards his Prophet. It is also a rejection of the superstitious attitude that people usually adopt in such circumstances, for the decree of Allâh is ever executed and nothing can ward off His decree.[2]

His economic contribution to the establishment of the state

'Uthmân ﷺ was one of the richest of those on whom Allâh had bestowed wealth. He engaged in trade and was very wealthy, but he used this wealth in obedience to Allâh, seeking His pleasure and that which is with Him. Thus, he was always first to do good and spend, and he did not fear poverty. Among the many examples of his spending are the following:

The well of Bi'r Roomah

When the Prophet ﷺ came to Madînah he found that there was very little fresh water there and there was no source of fresh water in Madînah except the well of Bi'r Roomah. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَنْ يَشْتَرِي بِئْرَ رُومَةَ فَيَجْعَلُ فِيهَا دَلْوَهُ مَعَ دِلَاءِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بِخَيْرٍ لَهُ مِنْهَا فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

"Who will buy Bi'r Roomah and share it with the Muslims in return for reward in Paradise?"[3]

And he said:

«مَنْ حَفَرَ رُومَةَ فَلَهُ الجَنَّةُ»

[1] *Majma' az-Zawâ'id* by al-Haythami, 9/83; its *isnâd* is *hasan* because of corroborating reports.

[2] *Al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen : A'mâl wa Ahdâth,* by Dr. Ameen al-Qadâh, p. 73

[3] *Saheeh an-Nasâ'i* , no. 3638 by al-Albâni, 2/766 and *at-Tirmidhi* (3703)

"Who will dig the well of Bi'r Roomah and Paradise will be his?"[1]

Before the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ, no one could drink from Bi'r Roomah except in return for payment. When the Muhâjiroon came to Madînah, they did not like the water. A man from Banu Ghifâr had a well called Roomah and he used to sell water from it by the bucketful. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Will you sell it in return for a spring in Paradise?" He said: O Messenger of Allâh, my family and I do not have anything else. News of that reached 'Uthmân and he bought it for thirty-five thousand dirhams, then he came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: Will you promise me in return for it the same as you promised him? He said: "Yes." He said: Then I give it to the Muslims.[2]

And it was said that Roomah was a spring that belonged to a Jew who used to sell its water to the Muslims, then 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân bought it from the Jew for twenty thousand dirhams and donated it for the rich and poor and wayfarers.[3]

Expansion of the Prophet's Mosque

After the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ built his mosque in Madînah, the Muslims would gather there to offer the five daily prayers and to listen to the speeches of the Prophet ﷺ in which he would issue commands and prohibitions, and they learned about their religion in the mosque. They would set out from the mosque for their campaigns and return to it when they came back. Hence the mosque became too small for the people, and the Prophet ﷺ asked some of the Sahâbah to buy the land next to the mosque so that the mosque could be expanded and made big enough to accommodate all the people. He said:

---

[1] Narrated by *al-Bukhâri*, no. 2778 in a *mu'allaq* report. It is *saheeh* because there are corroborating reports

[2] *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi bi Sharh Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, 10/196

[3] *Fath al-Bâri*, 5/408; *al-Hikmah fi'l-Da'wah ila Allâh*, p. 231

«مَنْ يَشْتَرِي بُقْعَةَ آلِ فُلَانٍ فَيَزِيدُهَا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ بِخَيْرٍ لَهُ مِنْهَا فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

"Who will buy the land of So and so and add it to the mosque in return for something good for him in Paradise?"[1]

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ bought it with his own money for twenty-five thousand dirhams, or for twenty thousand, then it was added to the mosque, [2] which then became large enough to accommodate the Muslims.[3]

Tabook and the generosity of 'Uthmân

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ wanted to set out on the campaign to Tabook, he urged the wealthy Sahâbah to spend on equipping the army that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was mobilizing to fight the Byzantines. The companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spent whatever they could afford, and 'Uthmân ﷺ spent a huge amount that no one else could match.[4] This has been described above in the discussion on his role in the campaign to Tabook.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhi* 3703 by *al-Albâni*, 3/209, *Sunan an-Nasâ'i*, no. 2921

[2] *Saheeh Sunan an-Nasâ'i*, (3638) and *at-Tirmidhi* (3703)

[3] *A'lâm al-Muslimeen* by Khâlid al-Baytâr, 3/41

[4] *al-Hikmah fi'l-Da'wah ila Allâh*, p. 231



Ahâdeeth of the Messenger ﷺ about 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân

What was narrated about his virtues alongside others

'Open the gate for him and give him the glad tidings of Paradise in return for a calamity that will befall him'

It was narrated that Abu Moosa ؓ said: I was with the Prophet ﷺ in one of the gardens of Madînah when a man came and asked for the gate to be opened. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Open the gate for him and give him the glad tidings of Paradise." I opened the gate and saw it was Abu Bakr, and I gave him the glad tidings of what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had said, and he praised Allâh. Then another man asked for the gate to the opened, and the Prophet ﷺ said: "Open the gate for him and give him the glad tidings of Paradise." I opened the gate and saw it was 'Umar, and I gave him the glad tidings of what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had said, and he praised Allâh. Then another man asked for the gate to be opened, and (the Prophet ﷺ) said: "Open the gate for him and give him the glad tidings of Paradise in return for a calamity that will befall him." It was 'Uthmân, and I told him what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had said, and he praised Allâh,

then he said: Allâh is the One Whose help I seek.[1]

This *hadeeth* speaks of the virtue of the three men mentioned, namely Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân, and states that they are among the people of Paradise. It also speaks of the virtue of Abu Moosa, and shows that it is permissible to praise a man to his face if there is no worry about self admiration and the like. And it contains an obvious miracle, in that the Prophet ﷺ foretold the calamity that would befall 'Uthmân, and that all three would persevere in faith and guidance.[2]

'Be still, O Uhud, for there is no one on you but a Prophet, a siddeeq and two martyrs'

It was narrated that Anas ﷺ said: The Prophet ﷺ climbed Uhud, accompanied by Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân, and (the mountain) shook. He said:

«اسْكُنْ أُحُدُ، - أَظُنُّهُ ضَرَبَهُ بِرِجْلِهِ - فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ وَصِدِّيقٌ وَشَهِيدَانِ»

"Be still, O Uhud," and I think he struck it with his foot - "for there is no one on you but a Prophet, a siddeeq and two martyrs."[3]

'Be calm for there is no one on you but a Prophet, a Siddeeq or a martyr'

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was on Hira', along with Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân, 'Ali, Talhah and az-Zubayr, and the rock shook. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«اهْدَأْ، فَمَا عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ أَوْ صِدِّيقٌ أَوْ شَهِيدٌ»

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 3695

[2] *Sharh al-Nawawi 'Ala Saheeh Muslim*, 15/170, 171

[3] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 3697

"Be calm, for there is no one on you but a Prophet or a Siddeeq or a martyr."[1]

The modesty of 'Uthmân ﷺ

It was narrated from Yahya ibn Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas that Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas told him that 'Aa'ishah the wife of the Prophet ﷺ and 'Uthmân ﷺ told him that Abu Bakr asked for permission to enter upon the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he was lying down on his bed, wrapping himself in the cover of 'Aa'ishah. He gave permission to Abu Bakr (to enter) when he was like that, and he fulfilled his need then he went away. Then 'Umar asked for permission to enter and he gave him permission (to enter) when he was like that, and he fulfilled his need then he went away. 'Uthmân said: Then I asked permission to enter and he sat up and said to 'Aa'ishah:

«اجْمَعِي عَلَيْكِ ثِيَابَكِ»

"Cover yourself properly."

I fulfilled my need then I went away. 'Aa'ishah said: O Messenger of Allâh, why did I not see you stirring for Abu Bakr and 'Umar as you did for 'Uthmân? The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "

«إِنَّ عُثْمَانَ رَجُلٌ حَيِيٌّ، وَإِنِّي خَشِيتُ، إِنْ أَذِنْتُ لَهُ عَلَى تِلْكَ الْحَالِ، أَنْ لَا يَبْلُغَ إِلَيَّ فِي حَاجَتِهِ»

'Uthmân is a shy man, and I was afraid that if I gave him permission to enter when I was in that state, he would not tell me of his need."[2]

The shyness of the angels before 'Uthmân

It was narrated from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd al-Rahmân that

[1] *Muslim,* no. 2417
[2] *Muslim,* no. 2402

'Aa'ishah said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was lying down in my house with his thigh or shin uncovered. Abu Bakr asked for permission to enter and he let him in whilst he was in that state, and he spoke to him. Then 'Umar asked for permission to enter and he let him in whilst he was in that state, and he spoke to him. Then 'Uthmân asked for permission to enter and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sat up and straightened his garment - Muhammad (one of the narrators) said: I do not say that this all happened on one day - and he came in and he spoke to him. When he left, 'Aa'ishah said: Abu Bakr came in and you did not stir for him, and 'Umar came in and you did not stir for him, then 'Uthmân came in and you sat up and straightened your garment. He said:

«أَلَا أَسْتَحِي مِنْ رَجُلٍ تَسْتَحِي مِنْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ»

"Should I not feel shy before a man before whom the angels feel shy?"[1]

Al-Mannâwi said: The main characteristic of 'Uthmân is modesty, and modesty results from great respect for the One Who is looking at him as well as awareness of some faults that he can see in himself. It is as if he was overwhelmed by the glory of Allâh and saw in himself some faults and shortcomings. These are of the lofty qualities of those who are close to Allâh. Thus 'Uthmân was raised in status, so the chosen one of Allâh's creation (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) felt a sense of modesty and shyness before him, just as the one who loves Allâh loves His close friends, and the one who fears Allâh will be feared by all.[2]

"The most sincere (of this ummah) in modesty is 'Uthmân"

It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«أَرْحَمُ أُمَّتِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ، وَأَشَدُّهَا فِي دِينِ اللهِ عُمَرُ، وَأَصْدَقُهَا حَيَاءً

[1] *Muslim*, no. 2401

[2] *Fayd al-Qadeer* by al-Mannâwi, 4/302

عُثْمَانُ، وَأَعْلَمُهَا بِالْحَلاَلِ وَالْحَرَامِ مُعَاذُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ، وَأَقْرَؤُهَا لِكِتَابِ اللهِ أُبَيٌّ، وَأَعْلَمُهَا بِالْفَرَائِضِ زَيْدُ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ، وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَمِينٌ، وَأَمِينُ هَذِهِ الأُمَّةِ أَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الجَرَّاحِ»

"The most compassionate of my ummah is Abu Bakr, the strictest in adherence to religion is 'Umar, the most sincere in modesty is 'Uthmân, the most knowledgeable about halâl and harâm is Mu'âdh ibn Jabal, the most knowledgeable about the Book of Allâh is Ubayy, the most knowledgeable about inheritance is Zayd ibn Thâbit. Every nation has a keeper of secrets, and the keeper of secrets of this ummah is Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh."[1]

Ahâdeeth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about the turmoil *(Fitnah)* during which 'Uthmân would be killed

'Whoever is saved from three things is indeed saved'

It was narrated from 'Abd-Allâh ibn Hawâlah that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَنْ نَجَا مِنْ ثَلاَثٍ فَقَدْ نَجَا ثَلاثَ مَرَّاتٍ، مَوْتِي، وَالدَّجَّالِ وَقَتْلِ خَلِيفَةٍ مُصْطَبِرٍ بِالْحَقِّ مُعْطِيهِ»

"Whoever is saved from three things is indeed saved: my death, the Dajjâl and the murder of a caliph who is persevering in adhering to the truth and fulfilling his duty."[2]

It is well known that the caliph who was killed when he was persevering in adhering to the truth and fulfilling his duty was

[1] *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad, Bâqi Kitâb Musnad al-Mukthireen, Bâb Musnad Anas ibn Mâlik,* 12493

[2] *Al-Musnad,* 4/106, edited by Ahmad Shâkir

'Uthmân. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the caliph who is referred to in this *hadeeth* is 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ. This *hadeeth* - and Allâh knows best - points to the importance of avoiding partaking in this turmoil in word or in deed. "In deed" means taking part by inciting and stirring up turmoil or killing, etc, and "in word" means talking about it, repeating fabrications about it and saying things that are not true. Thus the *hadeeth* applies to the *ummah* in general, not just those who were alive at the time of the *fitnah* that claimed the life of 'Uthmân.[1]

'The one who is covering his head will be killed on that day'

It was narrated that Ibn 'Umar said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentioned turmoil and a man passed by and he said:

«يُقْتَلُ فِيهَا هَذَا الْمُقَنَّعُ يَوْمَئِذٍ مَظْلُومًا»

"The one who is covering his head will be killed unlawfully on that day."

He said: I looked and saw that it was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân.[2]

'On that day this man will be following right guidance'

It was narrated that Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah said:

«ذَكَرَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ فِتْنَةً فَقَرَّبَهَا، فَمَرَّ رَجُلٌ مُقَنَّعٌ رَأْسُهُ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ: هٰذَا، يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَى الْهُدَى. فَوَثَبْتُ فَأَخَذْتُ بِضَبْعَيْ عُثْمَانَ، ثُمَّ اسْتَقْبَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ﷺ، فَقُلْتُ: هٰذَا؟ قَالَ: هٰذَا»

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentioned some turmoil and gave the impression that it would soon come to pass. A man passed by with his head covered and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "On that day this man will be following right guidance." I rushed and grabbed 'Uthmân by the (upper) arm, then I turned to face

[1] *Fitnah Maqtal 'Uthmân,* by Dr. Muhammad 'Abd-Allâh al-Ghabân, 1/44

[2] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah,* 1/551. Its isnâd is *hasan* and Ahmad (2/115).

the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: This man? He said: "This man."[1]

'There will be turmoil like the horns of cows, but this man and those who are with him will be following the truth'

It was narrated that Murrah al-Bahzi said: I was with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and Bahz - one of the narrators of the hadeeth - said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«تَهِيجُ فِتْنَةٌ كَالصَّيَاصِي، فَهَذَا وَمَنْ مَعَهُ عَلَى الحَقِّ»

"There will be turmoil like the horns of cows, but this man and those who are with him will be following the truth."

I went and grabbed him by his cloak, and saw that it was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân.[2]

'On that day, this man and those who are with him will be following truth and right guidance'

It was narrated that Abu'l-Ash'ath said: Many people stood up to give speeches in (Baitul-Maqdis) during the governorship of Mu'âwiyah ؓ and the last one to speak was Murrah ibn Ka'b, who said: Were it not for a hadeeth that I heard from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, I would not have stood up (to speak). I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mention a turmoil that was close at hand, then a man whose head was covered passed by and he said:

«هَذَا يَوْمَئِذٍ وَأَصْحَابُهُ عَلَى الحَقِّ وَالْهُدَى»

"On that day, this man and those who are with him will be following truth and right guidance."

I said: This man, O Messenger of Allâh? And I turned him to face him. He said: "This man." That was 'Uthmân ؓ.[3]

---

[1] *Saheeh Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, 1/24 (111)

[2] *al-Musnad*, 5/33; there are other isnâds that strengthen it.

[3] *Musnad Ahmad, Musnad al-Shâmiyeen, Bâb Hadeeth Ka'b ibn Murrah al-Sulami aw Murrah ibn Ka'b, hadeeth* no. 17602 (4/236)

'You should be with the trustworthy one and his companions'

It was narrated from Abu Habeebah that he entered the house when 'Uthmân was being besieged, and he heard Abu Hurayrah asking permission to speak to 'Uthmân. Permission was given to him, and he stood up and praised Allâh, then he said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ say:

«إِنَّكُمْ تَلْقَوْنَ بَعْدِي فِتْنَةً وَاخْتِلَافًا، أَوْ قَالَ: اخْتِلَافًا وَفِتْنَةً. فَقَالَ لَهُ قَائِلٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ: فَمَنْ لَنَا يَارَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْأَمِينِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ»

"You will face turmoil and differences after I am gone - or differences and turmoil." One of the people said to him: Who could help us, O Messenger of Allâh? He said: "You should be with the trustworthy one and his companions"

And he pointed to 'Uthmân as he said it.[1]

'If the hypocrites want you to shed it (the caliphate), do not shed it'

It was narrated from 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, from al-Nu'mân ibn Basheer, that 'Aa'ishah said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent for 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went to him and spoke with him. When we saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ we turned to one another, and the last thing he said to him was when he struck him on the shoulder and said:

«يَا عُثْمَانُ، إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ عَلَى أَنْ يُلْبِسَكَ قَمِيصًا، فَإِنْ أَرَادَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ عَلَى خَلْعِهِ فَلَا تَخْلَعْهُ حَتَّى تَلْقَانِي، يَا عُثْمَانُ، إِنَّ اللهَ عَسَى أَنْ يُلْبِسَكَ قَمِيصًا فَإِنْ أَرادَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ عَلَى خَلْعِهِ فَلَا تَخْلَعْهُ حَتَّى تَلْقَانِي»

[1] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah,* 1/500. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh* and *Al-Musnad* 2/345.

"O 'Uthmân, Allâh will give you a garment to wear (i.e., the caliphate), so if the hypocrites want you to shed it, do not shed it until you meet me. O 'Uthmân, Allâh will give you a garment to wear, so if the hypocrites want you to shed it, do not shed it until you meet me,"

Three times. I (al-Nu'mân) said to her: O Mother of the Believers, why didn't you narrate this before? She said: I forgot it and by Allâh I did not remember it. He said: I narrated it to Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân and he did not approve of what I told him until he wrote to the Mother of the Believers asking her to write to him about it, and she wrote to him about it.[1]

'The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me some advice and I am going to persevere with it'

It was narrated from Abu Sahlah that 'Aa'ishah said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«ادْعُوا لِي بَعْضَ أَصْحَابِي»

"Call one of my companions for me."

I said: Abu Bakr? He said: "No." I said: 'Uthmân? He said: "Yes." When he came he said (to me): "Move away," then he started to converse with him, and 'Uthmân's colour changed. When he was besieged in his house, we said: O Ameer al-Mu'mineen, will you not fight? He said: No. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me some advice and I am going to persevere with it.[2]

This hadeeth shows the deep love that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had for 'Uthmân ؓ and how great was his concern for the welfare of the ummah after he was gone. He told him things that had to do with this turmoil that would end with his death, and he urged him to keep it secret, so that all that we know about it is

[1] *Musnad Ahmad, Bâqi Musnad al-Ansâr,* 24045 (6/87)

[2] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah,* 1/206. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh Al-Musnad* (6/52).

what 'Uthmân stated during the turmoil, when it was said to him: Will you not fight? And he said: No. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me some advice and I am going to persevere with it.[1]

From these words of his it is clear that the Prophet ﷺ taught him the correct attitude when turmoil breaks out, which will stop the turmoil spreading further. In some reports there is additional statement which reveals some of the contents of this secret conversation, and states that the Prophet ﷺ said to him: "If they ask you to shed the shirt with which Allâh has clothed you (i.e., the caliphate), do not do it."[2] The content of the advice mentioned by 'Uthmân ﷺ had to do with the turmoil and encouragement to be patient and not give up the caliphate, and the hadeeth indicated that he would be caliph one day.

It seems that there was advice and guidance about this turmoil which was known only to 'Uthmân ﷺ, as the Prophet ﷺ was keen to keep it secret, as is clear from his telling 'Aa'ishah ﷺ to move away when he wanted to converse privately with 'Uthmân ﷺ. He also spoke with him in a low voice, despite the fact that there was no one else there, until his colour changed, which is indicative of the seriousness of the conversation. The fact that 'Aa'ishah made a connection between this private conversation and the turmoil clearly indicates that this conversation was about the turmoil during which 'Uthmân was killed, and contained advice from the Prophet ﷺ to 'Uthmân to adopt the right stance and not give up the caliphate. The Prophet ﷺ did not only give warning of the turmoil; he spoke of that in many ahâdeeth as we have seen above, but in this private conversation there were other things beyond just saying that turmoil would happen, and he urged him to keep it secret for a reason, and Allâh knows best what it was.

This hadeeth clearly explains the reason why 'Uthmân refused to fight during the siege, and why he refused to give up

[1] Ibid.

[2] *Fadâ'il as-Sahâbah*, 1/613. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*. See also *at-Tabaqât*, 3/66,67

the caliphate when the people suggested that to him. Researchers and historians have wondered what the reason for this attitude was, and they were confused as to why 'Uthmân ﷺ took this stance.[1] The murder of 'Uthmân was one of many events that were foretold by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ during his lifetime, and this is the matter of the unseen. Knowledge of the unseen is one of the attributes of Allâh and none of His creation has the power to know the unseen. This was knowledge that Allâh granted to the Prophet ﷺ and ordered him to convey it to the people.[2] Allâh says:

﴿قُل لَّآ أَمۡلِكُ لِنَفۡسِي نَفۡعٗا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ ٱللَّهُۚ وَلَوۡ كُنتُ أَعۡلَمُ ٱلۡغَيۡبَ لَٱسۡتَكۡثَرۡتُ مِنَ ٱلۡخَيۡرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ ٱلسُّوٓءُۚ إِنۡ أَنَا۠ إِلَّا نَذِيرٞ وَبَشِيرٞ لِّقَوۡمٖ يُؤۡمِنُونَ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): 'I possess no power over benefit or hurt to myself except as Allâh wills. If I had the knowledge of the Ghayb (Unseen), I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me. I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings unto people who believe'" (*Al-A'râf* 7:188)

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Fitnah Maqtal 'Uthmân,* by Muhammad 'Abd-Allâh al-Ghabân, 1/48

[2] ibid.

‘Uthmân at the time of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar

At the time of Abu Bakr ﷺ

He was one of those consulted with regard to important matters of state

‘Uthmân ﷺ was one of the Sahâbah and one of ahl al-shoora, those whose opinions were sought concerning the most serious issues during the caliphate of Abu Bakr. He was second in closeness to Abu Bakr; ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ was known for firmness and resolve and ‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân was known for kindness and deliberation. ‘Umar was the adviser for the caliph Abu Bakr and ‘Uthmân was his keeper of secrets and senior scribe.[1] His opinion was held in high esteem by Abu Bakr. After Abu Bakr had finished dealing with the Riddah (apostasy) movement, he wanted to attack the Byzantines and send the army of jihad to the ends of the earth, so he consulted the people. Some wise men said what they thought, then Abu Bakr wanted more from them, so he said: What do you think? ‘Uthmân said: I think that you are sincere and kind towards the followers of this

[1] *‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân,* by Sâdiq ‘Arjoon, p. 58

religion. If you think that something is in their best interests, then go ahead with it, for you are above reproach.[1] Talhah, az-Zubayr, Sa'd, Abu 'Ubaydah, Sa'eed ibn Zayd and those of the Muhâjireen and Ansâr (may Allâh be pleased with them all) who were present in that meeting said: 'Uthmân has spoken the truth; whatever you think is best, go ahead with it.[2]

When Abu Bakr wanted to send a governor to Bahrain, he consulted his companions, and 'Uthmân said: Send a man whom the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent to them and he came back to him with the news that they had become Muslim. They know him and he knows them and the country (meaning al-'Ala' ibn al-Hadrami ﷺ). So Abu Bakr sent al-'Ala' to Bahrain.[3]

When Abu Bakr became very sick, he consulted the people to ask them who they wanted to take his place after he was gone, and they suggested 'Umar. 'Uthmân said of 'Umar: By Allâh, what I know of him is that he is better inwardly than he is outwardly, and there is no one like him.[4] Abu Bakr said: May Allâh have mercy on you. By Allâh, if you had not suggested 'Umar, I would have been disappointed.[5]

2. Economic crisis at the time of Abu Bakr

It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbâs said: There was a drought at the time of Abu Bakr. The people came to Abu Bakr and said: It has not rained and the earth is not bringing forth its produce and the people are suffering great hardship. Abu Bakr said: Go and be patient, for evening will not come before Allâh the Most Generous grants you relief. It was not long before the workers of 'Uthmân came from Syria, bringing him one hundred camels laden with

---

[1] *Tareekh Dimashq* by Ibn 'Asâkir, 2/63-65; *Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq* by as-Sallâbi, p. 264

[2] *Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq* by as-Sallâbi, p. 364

[3] *Kanz al-'Ummâl*, 5/620, no. 14093; *al-Quyood al-Wâridah 'ala Sultah al-Dawlah*, by 'Abd-Allâh al-Kaylâni,; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 4/122

[4] *al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 2/79; *Al-Khulafa' Al-Râshidoon* by Mahmoud Shâkir, p. 101

[5] *al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 2/79

wheat - or foodstuff. The people gathered at 'Uthmân's door and knocked on the door. 'Uthmân came out to the crowd of people and said: What do you want? They said: It has not rained and the earth is not bringing forth its produce and the people are suffering great hardship, and we have heard that you have food; sell it to us so that we may give it to the poor Muslims. 'Uthmân said: By all means, come in and buy. The merchants went in and saw the food in the house of 'Uthmân. He said: O merchants, how much profit will you give me for that which I bought from Syria? They said: Twelve in return for ten. 'Uthmân said: I have had a better offer. They said: Fifteen for ten. 'Uthmân said: I have had a better offer. The merchants said: O Abu 'Amr, there are no merchants in Madînah other than us. Who has given you a better offer? He said: Allâh, may He be blessed and exalted, has given me a better offer, ten for every dirham. Can you offer me more? They said: No, by Allâh. He said: I call upon Allâh to bear witness that I am giving this food as charity for the poor Muslims.[1] Ibn 'Abbâs said: Last night I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in my dream. He was riding a black and white mule, wearing a suit of light; on his feet were shoes of light, in his hand was a staff of light, and he was hastening. I said: O Messenger of Allâh, I am longing to see you and hear you speak. Where are you hastening to? He said: "O Ibn 'Abbâs, 'Uthmân has given charity, and Allâh has accepted it from him and given him a bride in Paradise, and I have been invited to the wedding."[2]

Will the money worshippers and those who hoard the people's food out of greed listen to these great words of 'Uthmân, and will these words reach their hearts, so that they will be kind and compassionate towards the poor and needy, widows and orphans who are in distress and crushed by life's calamities and whose plight is ignored by the rich? How great is the Muslims' need at this stage in their life to follow the example of 'Uthmân

---

[1] *al-Riqqah wa'l-Buka'* by Ibn Qudâmah, p. 190; *al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by Hasan Ayyoob, p. 191; *Shaheed al-Dâr* by Ahmad al-Khuroof, p. 21

[2] *al-Riqqah wa'l-Buka'*, p. 190

and spend on the poor and needy so as to bring about compassion and kindness between them.[1]

﴿كَلَّآ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَيَطْغَىٰٓ﴾

"Nay! Verily, man does transgress (in disbelief and evil deed)." (*Al-Alaq* 96:6)

This is an example of the kindness and generosity of 'Uthmân ﷺ, who was one of the most compassionate of people towards others. He read the words of Allâh:

﴿أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

"Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and each and every act of obedience to Allâh) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture! Have you then no sense?" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:44]

and that made him one of the farthest removed of people from hypocrisy and the hypocrites. And he read the words of Allâh:

﴿لَّيْسَ ٱلْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ ٱلْمَشْرِقِ وَٱلْمَغْرِبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَٱلنَّبِيِّۦنَ وَءَاتَى ٱلْمَالَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِۦ ذَوِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَٱلسَّآئِلِينَ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَى ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱلْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَٰهَدُوا۟ ۖ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ فِى ٱلْبَأْسَآءِ وَٱلضَّرَّآءِ وَحِينَ ٱلْبَأْسِ ۗ﴾

"It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allâh) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 52

kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masâkeen (the poor), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, performs As-Salâh (Iqâmat-as-Salâh), and gives the Zakâh, and who fulfil their covenant when they make it, and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during the battles)" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:177),

and he understood from that

﴿أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ صَدَقُواْۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ﴾

"Such are the people of the truth and they are Al-Muttaqoon (the pious" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:177).

At the time of 'Umar ﷺ

'Uthmân was held in high esteem by 'Umar, and when the people wanted to ask 'Umar about something, they would approach him through 'Uthmân and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf. 'Uthmân was known as al-Radeef, and *radeef* in Arabic refers to one who rides behind or stands beside another man and could play his role; they would use this word to refer to a man who they thought would be a leader one day. If these two men could not achieve something, they would bring in al-'Abbâs as the third one.[1]

On one occasion it happened that 'Umar set out with the people and they camped in a place called Sirâr. 'Uthmân came and asked him: What is going on? What do you intend to do? 'Umar called out: *As-Salâtu jâmi'ah*, then he told the people that he had decided to invade Iraq.[2]

When 'Umar became caliph, he consulted the prominent Sahâbah about his salary from the bayt al-mâl of the Muslims, and 'Uthmân said to him: Eat and feed others.[3]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 4/83; *al-Murtada* by al-Nadawi, p. 131

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, al-Khaleefah as-Shâkir as-Sâbir*, p. 63

[3] ibid.

When Abu 'Ubaydah sent for 'Umar to come to Bayt al-Maqdis to conquer it, 'Umar consulted the people and 'Uthmân suggested that he should not go to them as a token of humiliation towards them. He said to 'Umar: If you stay here and do not go to them, they will think that you are not worried about them and are prepared to fight them, and they will soon feel humiliated and pay the jizyah.[1] But 'Ali suggested that he go there, and 'Umar preferred Ali's suggestion, because it was easier for the Muslims who had been besieging the enemy without success.[2]

During the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ, the status of 'Uthmân was that of an adviser, and you could say that his position was like that of 'Umar to Abu Bakr during Abu Bakr's caliphate. Allâh gave Abu Bakr an adviser who was as sincere towards him as he would be towards the closest of his own family, namely 'Umar; and He gave 'Umar an adviser who was as sincere towards him as he would be towards the closest of his own family, namely 'Uthmân. Abu Bakr was the most compassionate of people towards others and 'Umar was the strictest of them when it came to the truth, so Allâh combined the compassion of Abu Bakr with the strictness of 'Umar, which resulted in a caliphate of truth, justice and strong resolve. 'Uthmân ﷺ was more like Abu Bakr in his compassion, and 'Umar remained strict as was his wont, so when he became caliph after Abu Bakr, he found in his adviser 'Uthmân a replacement, as it were, for the compassion and kindness of Abu Bakr. All of that resulted in the best examples for ruling and directing the affairs of the ummah in a wise and fair manner. The people knew of 'Uthmân's status during the caliphate of 'Umar, and he was the one who suggested to 'Umar the idea of keeping records (the diwân) and writing a calendar, as is mentioned in some reports.

The *Diwân* (keeping records)

When the conquests spread further and wealth increased,

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Muhammad Husayn Haykal, p. 47, 48, quoting from *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 24

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân al-Khaleefah ash-Shâkir*, p. 63

'Uthmân gathered some of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and consulted them about this wealth. 'Uthmân said: I think it is a lot of wealth and sufficient for everyone, but if records are not kept in order to know who has taken from it and who has not, I fear that the wealth may run out. 'Umar agreed with 'Uthmân and they set up the system of record-keeping (the *diwân*).[1]

The calendar

In some reports it says that the one who suggested to 'Umar that he should make the Hijri year start with Muharram was 'Uthmân. When they agreed, after consultation, to make the Islamic calendar start with the Hijrah of the Prophet ﷺ, because that was the dividing point between truth and falsehood, opinions were divided as to which month should be regarded as the beginning of the year. 'Uthmân said: Date the beginning of the year from Muharram, because it is a sacred month and the first of the months in counting, and it is when the people come back from Hajj. 'Umar and those who were present with him approved of 'Uthmân's opinion, and thus the matter was settled and the beginning point of the Islamic calendar was decided.[2]

The *kharâj* lands

'Uthmân was one of those who supported the view of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, that the conquered lands should not be divided among the conquerors and they should be left as a source of income (via *kharâj*) for the Muslims and their descendants after them.[3]

His *Hajj* with the Mothers of the Believers

When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb became caliph in 13 AH, that year he appointed 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf in charge of the Hajj, and he led the people on Hajj, and he did Hajj with 'Umar during

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/203

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 60

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 25

'Umar's last Hajj in 23 AH. In that year 'Umar gave permission to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ to perform Hajj. They rode in hawdahs and he sent 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf to accompany them. As they travelled, 'Uthmân rode ahead of them and would not let anyone come near them, and they stopped at every place 'Umar stopped, and 'Uthmân and 'Abd al-Rahmân would make them stop inside the mountain passes, and the two men would stop at the entrances to the passes, so that no one could pass by them.[1]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 3/134; *Ansâb al-Ashrâf* by al-Balâdhuri, 1/465, 466; *Majallat al-Buhooth al-Islamiyyah*, issue no. 10, p. 263

Chapter 2

'Uthmân's appointment as caliph, his approach to ruling and the main features of his character

'Uthmân's appointment as caliph

'Umar's deep insight when appointing his successor

'Umar's concern remained focused on the unity and future of the ummah even during the last moments of his life, despite the painful wounds from which he was suffering. Undoubtedly this was a critical moment in history, in which his deep faith, sincerity and selflessness were manifested.[1] During those critical moments, 'Umar managed to invent a new and unprecedented way of choosing the new caliph. This is tangible and clear evidence of his understanding and skill in running the affairs of the ummah. The Prophet ﷺ had passed away before him without clearly appointing a successor, and when Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq

[1] *al-Khaleefah al-Farooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb* by al-'Aani, p. 161

passed away, he appointed 'Umar after consulting the senior Sahâbah. When 'Umar was asked to appoint a successor as he was on his death bed, he thought for a while, then he decided on a different method that suited the situation. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ died, the people were all agreed upon the superiority and seniority of Abu Bakr, so the possibility of conflict was remote, especially since the Prophet ﷺ had shown the ummah, in word and deed, that Abu Bakr was the most qualified to take control after he died. When Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar as his successor, he knew that the Sahâbah were all convinced that 'Umar was the strongest and most capable of bearing that responsibility after he was gone. So he appointed him as caliph after consulting the senior Sahâbah, and no one disagreed with him, so there was consensus and they all swore allegiance to 'Umar.[1]

The method of selecting the new caliph was based on limiting shoora to a specific number of people. 'Umar chose six of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, all of whom were fit to become caliph, even though they varied in their qualifications for the post. 'Umar also defined the way in which the selection was to be made, and how long it should take. He ordered some troops to keep watch over the proceedings and stipulated punishments for anyone who went against the jamâ'ah. He sought to prevent disorder by ruling that no one was to enter upon them or listen to what was going on in the assembly of decision makers.[2]

There follows a more detailed discussion of these events:

The number of those appointed for the shoora, and their names

The number of men appointed was six. They were: 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm and Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh (may Allâh be pleased with them all). Sa'eed ibn

---

[1] *Awwaliyyât al-Farooq*, p. 124; *Fath al-Bâri*, 13/208

[2] *Awwaliyyât al-Farooq*, p. 124

Zayd ibn Nufayl was excluded even though he was one of the ten who had been promised Paradise; perhaps that was because he was from the tribe of Banu 'Adiyy (which was 'Umar's own tribe).[1] 'Umar was very careful to exclude his relatives from positions of authority, even though there were among them those who were qualified for that. So he kept his relative Sa'eed ibn Zayd off the list of nominees for the caliphate.[2]

The way in which the caliph was to be selected

He commanded them to assemble in the house of one of them and consult with one another. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar was to be present among them as an advisor only, with no say in the matter. Prayers were to be led by Suhayb al-Roomi during this consultation period, and he said to him: You are the prayer leader for these three days. He did not appoint any of the six to lead the prayers lest that be interpreted as 'Umar's nominating him to be caliph.[3] And al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad and Abu Talhah al-Ansâri were commanded to watch over the proceedings.[4]

How long the selection process took

'Umar ﷺ stipulated a period of three days, which was sufficient time. If they took longer than that, it would mean that deep conflict would spread, so he said to them: "Do not let the fourth day come without you having a leader over you."[5]

The number of votes that were sufficient to elect the caliph

Ibn Sa'd narrated, with an *isnâd* whose men are *thiqât* (trustworthy), that 'Umar said to Suhayb: "Lead the people in prayer for three days, and leave this group of men in a house. When they have agreed upon a man, then whoever disagrees

---

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/142

[2] *al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by al-Khâlidi, p. 98

[3] *al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Râshidoon* by al-Bahnasâwi, p. 213

[4] *Ashhar Mashâheer al-Islam fi'l-Harb wa'l-Siyâsah,* p. 648

[5] *at-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/364

with them, strike his neck (i.e., execute him)."[1] 'Umar ﷺ issued orders that anyone who tried to go against this group and cause division among the Muslims was to be executed, acting upon the command of the Prophet ﷺ:

«مَنْ أَتَاكُمْ، وَأَمْرُكُمْ جَمِيعٌ، عَلَى رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ، يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَشُقَّ عَصَاكُمْ، أَوْ يُفَرِّقَ جَمَاعَتَكُمْ، فَاقْتُلُوهُ»

"Whoever comes to you when you are united behind one man, seeking to cause division among you, then execute him."[2]

What is mentioned in the history books, that 'Umar ﷺ commanded them to gather and consult one another, and stated that if five of them agreed on a man and one objected, his head was to be struck with the sword, and if four of them agreed on a man and two of them objected, their heads were to be struck[3] , is a report that has no sound chain of transmission. It is one of the weird reports concocted by Abu Makhnaf, the Râfidi Shi'i, and it is contrary to the *saheeh* texts and what is known of the conduct of the Sahâbah. Abu Makhnaf narrated that 'Umar said to Suhayb: "Stand over them - i.e., the people of shoora - and if five agree on a man and one objects, strike his head with the sword. If four of them agree on a man and two object, then strike their heads."[4] But this is a false report. How could 'Umar have said such a thing, when he knew that they were among the elite of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and he was the one who had chosen them for this task because he knew of their virtue and high status?[5]

It was narrated from Ibn Sa'd that 'Umar said to the Ansâr: "Let them stay in a house for three days. If they come to an

[1] *at-Tabaqât*, 3/342

[2] *Muslim*, no.1852, 3/1480

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/226

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/226

[5] *Marwiyât Abu Mukhnaf fi Tareekh at-Tabari*, by Dr Yahya al-Yahya, p. 175

agreement (all well and good), otherwise enter upon them and strike their necks (i.e., cut off their heads)."[1] These narrations have unconnected chains and also include Sammâk ibn Harb, who is a weak narrator.[2]

Ruling in the case of a difference of opinion

'Umar advised them that 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar should be present with them in the gathering, but he was not to have any say in the matter. But he told them: "If three men approve of one man and three approve of another man, then refer to 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar, and whichever of the two groups he favours, let them choose a man from among themselves. If they do not approve of the ruling of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar, then go with the group among whom is 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf." He described 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf as being wise and mature, saying, "What a wise man 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf is, and how mature. He is guided and protected by Allâh, so listen to him."[3]

A group of Muslim soldiers were to watch over the election and prevent disorder

'Umar said to Abu Talhah al-Ansâri: "O Abu Talhah, Allâh, may He be exalted and glorified, has supported Islam through you. Choose fifty men of the Ansâr to urge this group until they choose a man from among their number."[4] And he said to al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad: "When you have placed me in my grave, bring this group of men together in a house until they elect one of their number."[5]

Permissibility of appointing someone as caliph even if there is someone else who is better than him

One of the things that we learn from the story of the shoora is

---

[1] *at-Tabaqât,* 3/342

[2] *Marwiyât Abu Mukhnaf fi Tareekh at-Tabari,* p. 176

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/225

[4] op. cit., 2/225

[5] op. cit., 5/225

that it is permissible to appoint someone as caliph even if there is someone else who is better than him, because 'Umar appointed six men for the shoora even though he knew that some of them were better than others. This can also be seen in the fact that when 'Umar appointed governors, he did not take into account their level of religious commitment only, but he also looked at their ability in dealing with people whilst avoiding anything that goes against sharee'ah. So he appointed Mu'âwiyah, al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah and 'Amr ibn al-'Aas even though there were others who were superior to them in terms of religious commitment and knowledge, such as Abu'l-Darda' in Syria and Ibn Mas'ood in Kufah.[1]

'Umar's compromise between appointing a successor and not appointing one

'Umar compromised between appointing a successor, as Abu Bakr had done, by selecting candidates, and not appointing one as the Messenger ﷺ had done. He selected six people and asked them to consult one another about the matter.[2]

Consultation was not only among these six

'Umar knew that consultation would not take place only among these six men, rather public opinion in Madînah on who should be appointed as caliph would also be taken into consideration. He set a limit of three days so that their choice of the one who would be appointed as his successor would be based on the agreement of the majority of those present at that time in Madînah, where most of the Sahâbah were living. All those living elsewhere would follow them in whatever they agreed upon. Until 23 AH, Madînah was still the gathering place of the Sahâbah, and the senior Sahâbah were still there as 'Umar kept them by his side and did not allow them to migrate to the conquered lands.[3]

---

[1] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah – Fajr al-Islam wa'l-'Asr al-Râshidi* (2/97)

[2] ibid.

[3] ibid.

The shoora council was the highest political body

'Umar ﷺ gave the shoora council alone the responsibility of selecting the new caliph from among their number and it is important to note that not one of the shoora council objected to this decision that was taken by 'Umar, and none of the other Sahâbah objected either. This is what is indicated by the texts that we have before us, and we do not know of any other suggestion that was made or any objection that was raised by anyone at that time to 'Umar's command either during the last moments of his life or after his death. All the people agreed with this arrangement and thought that it was in the best interests of all the Muslims. We can say that 'Umar formed the highest political body and entrusted it with the mission of selecting the head of state or caliph, and this was a new organisational system introduced by the genius of 'Umar which did not contradict the basic principles established by Islam, especially those that have to do with the principle of shoora, because what matters is the general swearing of allegiance *(bay'ah)* which takes place in the jâmi' mosque. There may be a question that arises here: who gave 'Umar the right to do this? What is the basis for 'Umar making this arrangement? It is sufficient to note that a number of Muslims approved of this arrangement and no voice was heard objecting to it, so we can be certain that there was consensus *(ijmâ')* - which is one of the sources of sharee'ah - that it was a valid arrangement.[1]

We should not forget that 'Umar was a wise caliph, and we may be certain that this principle - that the shoora council is the highest political body - was approved by the Islamic regime at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Moreover, the council that was appointed by 'Umar enjoyed many advantages that were not shared by any other Muslim group, advantages that were bestowed by Allâh and confirmed by the Messenger ﷺ, and no other Muslim could reach the status of piety and trustworthiness

---

[1] *Nizâm al-Hukm fi'l-Sharee'ah wa'l-Tareekh al-Islami,* by Zâfir al-Qâsimi, 1/227, 228

that these ten had reached.[1]

Thus 'Umar's life came to an end, and neither the calamity that had befallen him nor the pangs of death could keep him from conducting the affairs of the Muslims and establishing an unprecedented system of shoora. Undoubtedly the basic principle of shoora is established in the Holy Qur'ân and the Sunnah, both words and deeds, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and Abu Bakr both implemented this principle. So 'Umar was not introducing a new or innovated principle, rather what 'Umar did was to set out a method of selecting a new caliph and limit the number of people from whom the choice was to be made. This was not done by the Messenger ﷺ or by Abu Bakr ﷺ; the first one to do that was 'Umar, and what a good thing he did. It was the best of the options available to the Sahâbah at that time.[2]

'Umar's advice to the caliph who would come after him

'Umar ﷺ offered important advice to the caliph who was to come after him and lead the ummah. He said: "I advise you to fear Allâh alone, with no partner or associate. I advise you to treat the first muhâjireen well and acknowledge their seniority. I advise you to treat the Ansâr well, and show approval of those among them who do well, and forgive those among them who make mistakes. I advise you to treat the people of the outlying regions well, for they are a shield against the enemy and conduits of *fay'* (booty); do not take anything from them except that which is surplus to their needs. I advise you to treat the people of the desert well, for they are the original Arabs and the protectors of Islam. Take from the surplus of their wealth and give it to their poor. I advise you to treat *ahl al-dhimmah* (Jews and Christians living in Muslim lands under goverment protection) well, to defend them against their enemies and not burden them with more than they can bear if they fulfil their duties towards the believers or pay the

[1] op. cit., 1/229

[2] *Awwaliyyât al-Farooq* by Dr. Ghâlib 'Abd al-Kâfi al-Qurashi, p. 127

jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. I advise you to fear Allâh and fear His wrath, lest you do anything wrong.

I advise you to fear Allâh with regard to the people, but do not fear the people with regard to Allâh. I advise you to treat the people justly, and to devote yourself to looking after them and protecting them against their enemies. Do not show any favour to the rich over the poor. That will be better for your spiritual well being and will help to reduce your burden of sin, and it will be better for your Hereafter, until you meet the One Who knows what is in your heart. I instruct you to be strict with regard to the commands of Allâh, His sacred limits and disobedience with all people, both relatives and others. Do not show any mercy to anyone until you have settled the score with him according to his offence. Treat all people as equal, and do not worry about who is at fault or fear the blame of the blamers. Beware of showing favouritism among the believers with regard to the *fay'* that Allâh has put you in charge of, lest that lead to injustice. Keep away from that. You are in a position between this world and the Hereafter. If you conduct your affairs justly in this world and refrain from indulgence, that will earn you faith and divine pleasure. But if you let whims and desires overwhelm you, you will incur the displeasure of Allâh.

I advise you not to let yourself or anyone else do wrong to *ahl al-dhimmah.* I am offering you sincere advice; seek thereby the Countenance of Allâh and the Hereafter. I have chosen advice for you that I would offer to myself or my son. If you do as I have advised you and follow my instructions, you would have gained a great deal. If you do not accept it or pay attention to it, and do not handle your affairs in the way that pleases Allâh, that will be a shortcoming on your part and you will have failed to be sincere, because whims and desires are the same and the cause of sin is Iblees, who calls man to everything that will lead to his doom. He misguided the generations who came before you and led them to Hell, what a terrible abode. What a bad deal it is for a man to take

the enemy of Allâh as his friend, who calls him to disobey Allâh. Adhere to the truth, strive hard to reach it and admonish yourself. I urge you by Allâh to show mercy to the Muslims, honour their elderly, show compassion to their young ones and respect the knowledgeable ones among them. Do not harm them or humiliate them, and do not keep the *fay'* for yourself lest you anger them. Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due, thus making them poor. Do not keep them away on campaigns for so long that they end up having no children. Do not allow wealth to circulate only among the rich. Do not close your door to the people lest that allow the strong to oppress the weak. This is my advice to you, as Allâh is my witness, and I greet you with peace."[1]

This advice is indicative of 'Umar's farsightedness with regard to matters of ruling and administration, which clearly reflects an integrated methodology and system of ruling and administration.[2] This advice covers a number of very important issues and deserves to be viewed as a precious document because it includes basic principles of ruling which incorporate the religious, political, military, economic and social aspects of rule, which includes the following:

Advice to fear Allâh

(a) Strong advice to fear Allâh in secret and in public, in word and deed, because the one who fears Allâh will be protected by Him. "I advise you to fear Allâh alone, with no partner or associate." "I advise you to fear Allâh and fear His wrath."

(b) Imposing the *hudood* punishments on relatives and strangers alike. "Do not worry about who is at fault or fear the blame of the blamers" because *hudood* punishments are set out by

---

[1] *at-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/339; *al-Bayân wa'l-Tabyeen* by al-Jâhiz, 2/46; *Jumhurat Khutab al-'Arab*, 1/263-265; *al-Kâmil fi'l-Tareekh*, 2/210; *al-Khaleefah al-Farooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb* by al-'Aani, p. 171, 172

[2] *al-Idârah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, p. 381

sharee'ah and are part of the religion and sharee'ah that leaves people with no excuse, so their words and deeds will be measured according to it, and neglecting it will corrupt religion and society.

(c) Firm adherence to Islam -

﴿فَٱسْتَقِمْ كَمَآ أُمِرْتَ﴾

"So stand (ask Allâh to make) you (Muhammad) firm and straight (on the religion of Islamic Monotheism) as you are commanded" [Hood 11:112].

This is something that is essential in both religious and worldly terms, and is something that is required of the ruler in both word and deed, and also of the people. "Admonish yourself." "Seek thereby the Countenance of Allâh and the Hereafter."

Advice regarding political matters

(a) Adhering to justice, because that is the basis of rule, and establishing justice among the people gives the ruler authority and respect, and brings political and social stability. It enhances the position of the ruler in the eyes of the people. "I advise you to treat the people justly." "Treat all people as equal."

(b) Taking care of the first Muslims from among the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr*, because of their seniority in Islam, and because the Islamic religion and the political system that is based on it were established as the result of their striving, and they are its bearers and guardians. "I advise you to treat the first *Muhâjireen* well and acknowledge their seniority. I advise you to treat the *Ansâr* well, and show approval of those among them who do well, and forgive those among them who make mistakes."

Advice regarding military matters

(a) Paying attention to the army and preparing it properly, because of the great responsibility that is placed on its shoulders, in order to guarantee the safety and security of the state. Paying attention to the needs of the fighters.

(b) Not keeping the fighters away from their families on the borders for too long, so as to avoid the boredom, anxiety and loss of morale to which that may lead. It is essential to give them leave at specified times and let them go back to their families, where they could renew their energy and so that they will not cease to produce offspring. "Do not keep them away on campaigns for so long that they end up having no children." "I advise you to treat the people of the outlying regions well, for they are a shield against the enemy."

(c) Giving each soldier the *fay'* and stipend to which he is entitled, in order to guarantee a fixed income for him and his family, which will motivate him to fight in jihad and prevent him from worrying about his financial affairs. "Do not keep the *fay'* for yourself lest you anger them." "Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due, thus making them poor."

Advice regarding economic and financial matters

(a) Taking care to distribute wealth among the people in a just and fair manner, avoiding anything that could lead to the accumulation of wealth among one class, to the exclusion of others. "Do not allow wealth to circulate only among the rich."

(b) Not burdening ahl *al-dhimmah* with more than they can bear if they fulfil their financial obligations to the state. "[Do] not burden them with more than they can bear if they fulfil their duties towards the believers."

(c) Protecting the people's financial rights and not neglecting them; avoiding the imposition of more than they can bear. "Do not take anything from them except that which is

surplus to their needs." "Take from the surplus of their wealth and give it to their poor."[1]

5. Advice regarding social matters

(a) Taking care of the people, checking on them, meeting their needs and giving them their rights. "Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due."

(b) Avoiding selfishness, favouritism and following whims and desires, because these things pose the danger of the leader being led astray and leading to corruption in society and the disruption of human relations. "Beware of showing favouritism among the believers with regard to the fay' that Allâh has put you in charge of." "Do not show any favour to the rich over the poor."

(c) Respecting the people and being humble towards them, young and old, because this will lift human relations to a higher level and lead them to unite behind the leader and love him more. "I urge you by Allâh to show mercy to the Muslims, honour their elderly, show compassion to their young ones and respect the knowledgeable ones among them."

(d) Being accessible to the people, by listening to their complaints, judging among them and settling scores, otherwise relations will be adversely affected and there will be instability in society. "Do not close your door to the people lest that allow the strong to oppress the weak."

(e) Following the truth and striving to establish it in society in all situations and circumstances, because this is a social necessity that must be achieved. "Adhere to the truth, strive hard to reach it." "Treat all people as equal, and do not worry about who is at fault."

---

[1] *al-Khaleefah al-Farooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb* by al-'Aani, p. 174, 175

(f) Avoiding wrongdoing in all shapes and forms, especially with *ahl al-dhimmah*, because justice is to be established among all those who come under the state's rule, Muslims and otherwise, so that all may benefit from the justice of Islam. "I advise you not to let yourself or anyone else do wrong to *ahl al-dhimmah*."

(g) Taking care of the people of the desert and looking after them. "I advise you to treat the people of the desert well, for they are the original Arabs and the protectors of Islam."[1]

(h) Further advice offered by 'Umar to the one who came after him was: Do not leave anyone who was appointed during my reign for more than one year, but leave al-Ash'ari for four years.[2]

How 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf conducted the shoora process

Assembling the group for consultation

Barely had the people finished burying 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ when the members of the consultation group and the highest council of the state hastened to gather in the house of 'Aa'ishah the Mother of the Believers ﷺ, or it was said that they gathered in the house of Fâtimah bint Qays al-Fihriyyah, the sister of al-Dahhâk ibn Qays, to decide the most important issue facing the Muslims after the death of 'Umar. The people spoke and expressed their opinions, and they were guided by Allâh to agree on some terms that were approved by the notables and by all the Muslims.[3]

'Abd al-Rahmân called for some of them to give up their candidacy for the caliphate

[1] *al-Khaleefah al-Farooq 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb* by al-'Aani, p. 173-175

[2] *'Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 102

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 62, 63

When the members of the shoora council had assembled, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said to them: Delegate the matter to three among you. Al-Zubayr said: I delegate my say to 'Ali.[1] Talhah said: I delegate my say to 'Uthmân. Sa'd said: I delegate my say to 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf. So now there were three candidates: 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf. 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said: Which of you will declare that he should not be appointed, so we will give him the responsibility of choosing the caliph, and Allâh will watch over him, so that he may think to himself who is the best candidate? The two men remained silent. Then 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said: Will you leave it up to me, and Allâh is watching, so that I will only choose the better of you? They said: Yes.[2]

Delegating Ibn 'Awf to conduct the process of shoora

'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf began to contact people and consult them as soon as the meeting with the six candidates ended, on the Sunday morning, and that went on for three whole days, until dawn on Wednesday, the 4th of Muharram, which was the end of the period stipulated for them by 'Umar. 'Abd al-Rahmân started with 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, and said to him: If I do not choose you, then tell me who you would nominate for caliph. 'Ali said: 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. 'Abd al-Rahmân went to 'Uthmân and said to him: If I do not choose you, who would you nominate for caliph? 'Uthmân said: 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib. After that, Ibn 'Awf went to the other Sahâbah and consulted them, and he consulted each of the senior Sahâbah whom he met in Madînah, as well as the commanders of the army, and visitors to Madînah. His consultation also included women in seclusion, who expressed their views, as well as children and slaves in Madînah. The outcome of his consultation was that the majority of Muslims suggested 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, and some of them suggested 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib. At midnight on Wednesday, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb Fadâ'il Ashâb an-Nabi,* no. 3700

[2] ibid.

'Awf went to the house of his sister's son, al-Miswar ibn Makhramah, where he knocked at the door and found al-Miswar sleeping.[1] He banged on the door until he woke him up, then he said: I see you sleeping but by Allâh I have not slept much. Go and call az-Zubayr and Sa'd. So I [al-Miswar] called them for him, and he consulted them, then he called me and said: Call 'Ali for me. So I called him and he conversed with him until halfway through the night, then 'Ali got up and left. Then he said: Call 'Uthmân for me. So I called him and he conversed with him until the muezzin's call to Fajr prayer interrupted them.[2]

Agreement to swear allegiance to 'Uthmân

After Fajr prayer on the day of swearing allegiance (the last day of Dhu'l-Hijjah 23 AH/ 6 November 644 CE), which was led by Suhayb al-Roomi, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf came, wearing the head cover that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had put on his head. The men of the shoora committee had gathered by the minbar, and he sent for those of the Muhâjireen, Ansâr and army commanders who were present, among whom were Mu'âwiyah the governor of Syria, 'Umayr ibn Sa'd the governor of Homs, and 'Amr ibn al-'Aas the governor of Egypt. They had gone for Hajj with 'Umar and had come with him to Madînah.[3]

In the report narrated by al-Bukhâri it says: When the people had prayed Fajr and that group had assembled by the minbar, he sent for everyone who was present of the Muhâjireen and Ansâr, and he sent for the commanders of the army, who had attended Hajj that year with 'Umar. When they had gathered, 'Abd al-Rahmân recited the Shahâdah, then he said: O 'Ali, I have spoken to the people and asked for their opinions, and I do not believe that they think anyone is as good as 'Uthmân, but do not give anyone a reason to criticize you (by expressing disagreement with the majority). He (i.e., 'Abd al-Rahmân) said (to 'Uthmân): I swear

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Râshidoon* by al-Khâlidi, p. 106, 107

[2] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Ahkâm,* no. 7207

[3] *Shaheed al-Dâr 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* by Ahmad al-Khuroof, p. 37

allegiance to you in accordance with the way of Allâh and His Messenger and the two caliphs who came after him. So 'Abd al-Rahmân swore allegiance to him and the people swore allegiance to him, the Muhâjireen and the Ansâr and the commanders of the army and the Muslims.[1] According to the report of the author of *al-Tamheed wal-Bayân,* 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib was the first one to swear allegiance after 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf.[2]

The wisdom of 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf in conducting the shoora process

'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf conducted the shoora process in a manner that is indicative of his wisdom and noble character, and his preference for the general interests of the Muslims over any personal interest. He willingly gave up his chance for the highest position that any man could hope to attain in this world in order to keep the Muslims united, and he conducted the shoora process in a systematic way to choose the one who would become caliph and direct the Muslims' affairs. He succeeded by means of deliberation, patience, resolution and good management in achieving his great mission. The steps that he took were as follows:

(a) He explained his plan in the first meeting of the shoora council, drawn up within the time frame stipulated by 'Umar. Thus he was able to make all the members of the council express their views and he managed to find out the views and aims of each of them, and he executed his plan with clarity.

(b) He gave up his own right to candidacy so as to ward off any doubts about him and to create trust

(c) He found out what each of his partners in the shoora council was hoping to achieve. He kept discussing it with them until he obtained a partial result in which 'Uthmân was favored

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Ahkâm,* no. 7207

[2] *at-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân,* p. 26

with the support of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs and az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm. Thus it seemed to him that 'Uthmân had the majority of support from those present.

(d) Then he sought to find out what each of the two leading figures, 'Uthmân and 'Ali, thought of the other in relation to the other people nominated by 'Umar. He found out that each of them did not think that any of them was better than his counterpart, if he did not become caliph himself.

(e) He started to find out the opinion of those outside the shoora council, among the notables of the ummah and the people of wisdom, then the common folk and the weakest members of society. Then he realized that most of the people did not regard anyone as equal to 'Uthmân, so he swore allegiance to him and the people followed suit.[1]

Thus by means of his smartness, honesty, straightforwardness and selflessness, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf was able to give up his own ambition for caliphate and showed no interest in the highest position in the state. He passed this test and led the shoora council skilfully, which deserves the greatest appreciation.[2]

Al-Dhahabi said: One of the greatest deeds of 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf was when he took himself out of the race at the time of the shoora; he chose for the ummah what the decision-makers suggested and did a marvellous job in uniting the ummah behind 'Uthmân. If he had been unfair, he could have tried to seize the position himself or given it to his cousin and the closest of the council members to him, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs.[3]

Thus another form of shoora took place at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, which was appointing the caliph by

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 70, 71

[2] *Majallat al-Buhooth al-Islamiyyah,* issue no. 10, p. 225

[3] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala',* by Shams al-Deen al-Dhahabi, 1/86

means of a shoora council who were to select one of their number, after assessing public opinion, then the ummah in general was to swear allegiance to him.[1]

False reports inserted by the Râfidis into the story of the shoora

There are false reports and lies that the Râfidi Shi'ah have inserted into the history of Islam, including the story of the shoora and 'Uthmân's appointment as caliph. These reports were then taken up by the Orientalists who tried to spread them further, and many modern historians and thinkers have been influenced by them without examining the reports or checking their chains of transmission and texts, and thus they became widespread among the Muslims.

The Râfidi Shi'i historians paid attention to the story of the shoora and the appointment of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân as caliph, and they inserted lies and false reports into it. Some of them wrote whole books on the topic. Abu Makhnaf wrote a book called *Kitâb al-Shoora*, and Ibn 'Uqdah and Ibn Bâbawayh also wrote similar books.[2] Ibn Sa'd narrated nine reports via al-Wâqidi about the shoora, the oath of allegiance to 'Uthmân and the story of how he was appointed caliph.[3] He narrated another report via 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn Moosa which includes the murder of 'Umar, his limiting the shoora to six men, and his advice to both 'Ali and 'Uthmân if either of them should be appointed caliph, and his advice to Suhayb regarding this matter.[4]

Al-Balâdhuri narrated a report about the shoora and the oath of allegiance to 'Uthmân from Abu Makhnaf[5] , and from Hishâm al-Kalbi, some of which was quoted from Abu Makhnaf and some of which was narrated only by him[6] , and from al-Wâqidi[7] ,

---

[1] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 278

[2] *al-Dharee'ah ila Tasâneef al-Shi'ah*, 14/246

[3] *al-Tabaqât al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/63 and 3/67

[4] op. cit., 3/340

[5] *Ansâb al-Ashrâf* by al-Balâdhuri, 5/18, 19

and from 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn Moosa.[1] Al-Tabari based his version of this story on a number of reports, such as that of Abu Makhnaf.[2] Ibn Abi'l-Hadeed narrated some of the events of the shoora story via Ahmad ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez al-Jawhari[3] and he mentioned that he was quoting from the book *al-Shoora* by al-Wâqidi.[4] The Shi'ah reports include a number of interpolations for which there is no sound evidence. These are:

Accusation against the Sahâbah of favouritism in issues concerning the Muslims

The Shi'ah reports accuse the Sahâbah of favouritism in issues concerning the Muslims and suggest that 'Ali was not happy about 'Abd al-Rahmân choosing the caliph. It was narrated by Abu Makhnaf and Hishâm al-Kalbi from his father and Ahmad al-Jawhari that 'Umar gave the deciding choice in the event of an equal split to 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf, and 'Ali realized that the caliphate had slipped from his grasp because 'Abd al-Rahmân would choose 'Uthmân because they were related by marriage.[5] But Ibn Taymiyah refuted that there was any close relationship by blood between 'Uthmân and 'Abd al-Rahmân. He said; 'Abd al-Rahmân was not a brother or cousin of 'Uthmân, and he was not from the same clan at all. Rather one was from Banu Zuhrah and the other was from Banu Umayyah, and Banu Zuhrah was closer to Banu Hâshim than Banu Umayyah. Banu Zuhrah were maternal uncles of the Prophet ﷺ, including 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, of whom the Prophet ﷺ said:

«هٰذَا خَالِي فَلْيُرِنِي امْرُؤٌ خَالَهُ»

[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

[3] op. cit., 6/5

[4] *Athr al-Tashayyu' 'ala al-Riwâyât al-Tareekhiyyah* by Dr. 'Abd al-'Azeez Noor, p. 321. This is the main source for this section.

[5] *Sharh Nahj al-Balâghah*, 9/49, 50-58

[6] op. cit., 9/15

[7] *Athr al-Tashayyu' 'ala al-Riwâyât al-Tareekhiyyah*, p. 322

"This is my maternal uncle; who dares to compare his maternal uncle to mine?"[1]

The Prophet ﷺ did not establish brotherhood between one Muhâjir and another, or between one Ansâri and another, rather he established brotherhood between the Muhâjireen and the Ansâr. He established brotherhood between 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf and Sa'd ibn al-Rabee' al-Ansâri[2] . This hadeeth is well known and established in the books of Saheeh and elsewhere, and all the scholars know that.[3] The Shi'ah based their reports of 'Abd al-Rahmân's favouring 'Uthmân on the fact that they were related by marriage, but they forgot that the ties of blood are stronger than ties through marriage, and they also forgot the nature of the relationship between the believers in the first generation of Islam, and that it was based on neither ties of blood nor ties through marriage. The way in which 'Abd al-Rahmân and 'Uthmân were related through marriage was that 'Abd al-Rahmân was married to Umm Kalthoom bint 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet, the sister of al-Waleed.[4]

The Umawi party and the Hâshimi party

The report of Abu Makhnaf suggests that there was a dispute between Banu Hâshim and Banu Umayyah during the swearing of allegiance, but this is not true. It is not mentioned in any report, sound or weak.[5] Some historians were influenced by the reports of the Râfidi Shi'ah and based their incorrect analysis on these reports, so they portrayed the discussion among the companions of the Messenger ﷺ about the appointment of the new caliph as a tribal dispute, saying that the people divided into two groups, the Umawi party and the Hâshimi party. This is an imaginary idea

---

[1] *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, 3/220, no. 3752

[2] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb Manâqib al-Ansâr*, no. 3780

[3] *Minhâj al-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, 6/271, 272

[4] *al-Tabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/127

[5] *al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by Ameen al-Qadâh, p. 78, 79

and incorrect conclusion for which there is no evidence at all, because that is not the kind of atmosphere in which the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ were living when a Muhâjir would stand with an Ansâri against his own father or brother or cousin or tribe. It ignores the fact that these companions are the ones who sacrificed all worldly gains in order to protect their religion. It is not based on sound knowledge of these nobles who had been given the glad tidings of Paradise. There are many events in their lives which prove that these people were far above looking at things from such a narrow perspective when dealing with their affairs. It was not the matter of family or tribal representation; they were appointed to the shoora council because of their status in Islam.

Words that were falsely attributed to 'Ali ﷺ

Ibn Katheer said: What is said by many historians such as Ibn Jareer and others who narrated from unknown men about 'Ali saying to 'Abd al-Rahmân: You deceived me; you only appointed him because he is related to you through marriage and so that he would seek your advice every day, and that he did not swear allegiance to 'Uthmân until 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said,

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ ٱللَّهَ يَدُ ٱللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَن نَّكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَـٰهَدَ عَلَيْهُ ٱللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾

"Verily, those who give Bay'ah (pledge) to you (ﷺ) they are giving Bay'ah (pledge) to Allâh. The Hand of Allâh is over their hands. Then whosoever breaks his pledge, breaks it only to his own harm; and whosoever fulfils what he has covenanted with Allâh, He will bestow on him a great reward" (*Al-Fath* 48:10) is false.

Accusation against 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah

Abu Makhnaf stated in his report about the shoora that 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah sat at the door and Sa'd told them off. This would be strange if it was done by low-class people, let alone the noble Sahâbah. How could Sa'd have said to them: You want to say that you were present and were among the people of shoora, when people already knew the people of shoora by name and that was well established among them? In fact the report of Abu Makhnaf contradicts itself, as is clear to anyone who studies it and examines it against the sound sources. It is too obviously strange to mention. Dr Yahya al-Yahya has produced examples to disprove this report and show that it is not worthy of attention.[1] These are some of the ideas that he mentioned in order to warn against these poisonous notions that are widespread in our classical history books, which have influenced our thinkers, writers and historians.

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was more qualified to become the caliph

No believer would doubt that 'Uthmân ﷺ was more qualified to become caliph and that his claim to the caliphate was more valid. No one can criticize that except one who has deviation in his heart and who bears a grudge against the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ because of the hatred that he has in his heart towards them. This only applies to the Râfidi Shi'ah who have made it their main aim in life to slander and express hatred towards the Sahâbah (may Allâh be pleased with them). The criticism that they direct against the first three caliphs is not worth paying attention to because it is obviously unfounded and fabricated. In a number of definitive saheeh texts and well known reports there are signs that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was qualified to become caliph. These reports include the following:[2]

1- Allâh says:

---

[1] *Marwiyât Abi Makhnaf*, p. 179

[2] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah fi'l-Sahâbah*, 2/656

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
كَمَا ٱسْتَخْلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى ٱرْتَضَىٰ
لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِى لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِى شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَمَن
كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ﴾

"Allâh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely, give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fâsiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh)" (*An-Noor* 24:55)

The relevant point in this verse with regard to 'Uthmân being qualified for the caliphate is that he was one of those to whom Allâh granted succession in the land and granted authority. During his caliphate he did well and ruled the people with justice, establishing regular prayer, paying zakâh, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. So this verse indicates that he was qualified to become caliph.[1]

2- Allâh says:

﴿قُل لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ ٱلْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُو۟لِى بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَٰتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ
يُسْلِمُونَ ۖ فَإِن تُطِيعُوا۟ يُؤْتِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ وَإِن تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ
يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) to the Bedouins who lagged behind: 'You shall be called to fight against a people given to great warfare, then you shall fight them, or they shall surrender.

[1] ibid.

Then if you obey, Allâh will give you a fair reward; but if you turn away as you did turn away before, He will punish you with a painful torment'" (*Al-Fath* 48:16)

The relevant point in this verse with regard to 'Uthmân being qualified for the caliphate is that those who called these Bedouin would call them after the Prophet ﷺ was gone, and that was Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân (may Allâh be pleased with them all). Abu Bakr called them to fight the Byzantines, Persians and Turks. So it was obligatory to obey these three according to the text of the Qur'ân, and if it was obligatory to obey them then their caliphate was valid.[1]

3- It was narrated that that Abu Moosa ﷺ said:

«أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ دَخَلَ حَائِطًا، وَأَمَرَنِي بِحِفْظِ بَابِ الحَائِطِ، فَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ يَسْتَأْذِنُ فَقالَ: ائْذَنْ لَهُ وبَشِّرْهُ بِالجَنَّةِ. فإِذَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ، ثُمَّ جَاءَ آخَرُ يَسْتَأْذِنُ فَقالَ: ائذنْ لَهُ وَبَشِّرْهُ بِالجَنَّةِ. فإِذَا عُمَرُ، ثُمَّ جاءَ آخَرُ يَسْتَأْذِنُ فَسَكَتَ هُنَيْهَةً ثُمَّ قالَ: ائْذَنْ لَهُ وبَشِّرْهُ بالجَنَّةِ عَلَى بَلْوَى سَتُصِيبُهُ. فإِذَا عُثمانُ بنُ عَفَّانَ»

The Prophet ﷺ entered a garden and told me to watch the gate of the garden. A man came and asked permission to enter, and he said: "Let him in and give him glad tidings of Paradise." And that was Abu Bakr. Then another man came and asked permission to enter, and he said: "Let him in and give him glad tidings of Paradise." And that was 'Umar. Then another man came and asked permission to enter, and he said: "Let him in and give him glad tidings of Paradise for a calamity that will befall him." And that was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân.[2]

This hadeeth points to the order of the first three caliphs, and

[1] *al-Fasl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwa'wa'l-Nihal*, 4/109, 110

[2] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 3695

foretells a calamity that would befall 'Uthmân. This calamity befell him when he was besieged in his house, until he was killed unlawfully. So this hadeeth is one of the signs of Prophethood and indicated that 'Uthmân would be a martyr (may Allâh be pleased with him).[1]

4- Abu Dawood (ﷺ) narrated with his isnâd from Jâbir ibn 'Abd-Allâh that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«أُرِيَ اللَّيْلَةَ رَجُلٌ صَالِحٌ أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ نِيطَ بِرَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ وَنِيطَ عُمَرُ بِأَبِي بَكْرٍ وَنِيطَ عُثْمانُ بِعُمَرَ»

"Last night a righteous man was shown (in a dream) that Abu Bakr was tied to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and 'Umar was tied to Abu Bakr, and 'Uthmân was tied to 'Umar."

Jâbir said: When we left the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, we said: As for the righteous man, that was the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and as for their being tied to one another, they will be in charge of this matter with which Allâh has sent His Prophet ﷺ.[2]

5- Abu 'Abd-Allâh al-Hâkim narrated with his isnâd that Abu Hurayrah ﷺ said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ say:

«إِنَّهَا سَتَكُونُ فِتْنَةٌ وَاخْتِلَافٌ أَوِاخْتِلافٌ وَفِتْنَةٌ، قَالَ: قُلْنَا: يَارَسُولَ اللهِ، فَمَا تَأْمُرُنَا؟ قَالَ: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالأَمِينِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ»

"There will be turmoil and conflict - or conflict and turmoil." We said: O Messenger of Allâh, what do you command us to do? He said: "Be with the trustworthy one and his companions,"

And he pointed to 'Uthmân.[3] This hadeeth is an evident miracle of the Prophet ﷺ and points to the truth of his

[1] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah fi'l-Sahâbah,* 2/657

[2] *Sunan Abi Dawood,* (4636) 2/513

[3] *al-Mustadrak,* 3/99; he said: this hadeeth has a saheeh isnâd although they (al-Bukhâri and Muslim) did not narrate it; and al-Dhahabi agreed with him.

Prophethood, as it foretells the turmoil (fitnah) that would occur during the caliphate of 'Uthmân and it happened as it was foretold. The hadeeth also indicates that 'Uthmân was a legitimate caliph, as the Prophet ﷺ commanded the people to rally around 'Uthmân: when there arose turmoil and conflict with the caliph and leader, he commanded them to unite around him and stay with him, because he would be following the truth, whereas those who rebelled against him would be following falsehood, deviancy, whims and desires. The Messenger ﷺ testified that he ('Uthmân) would be adhering to the truth and would not depart from it. [1]

6- Abu 'Eesa al-Tirmidhi narrated with his isnâd going back to 'Aa'ishah ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«يَا عُثْمَانُ! إِنَّهُ لَعَلَّ اللهَ يُقَمِّصُكَ قَمِيصًا فَإِنْ أَرَادُوكَ عَلَى خَلْعِهِ فَلَا تَخْلَعْهُ لَهُمْ»

"O 'Uthmân, Allâh may give you a garment to wear, and if they want you to take it off, do not take it off for them."[2]

In this *hadeeth* the caliphate is likened to a garment, and the fact that he mentions that some people will want him to take it off is like a nomination, as if he is saying: Allâh will make you caliph, so if the people want to depose you, do not depose yourself for their sake, because you will be following truth whilst they will be following falsehood.[3]

7- al-Tirmidhi narrated with his isnâd that Abu Sahlah said: 'Uthmân said to me on the day when he was besieged: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me some advice and I am going to adhere to it.[4] The advice given was not to give up the caliphate,

[1] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah fi'l-Sahâbah*, 2/660

[2] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah*, 1/613; its isnâd is saheeh At-Tirmidhi (3705).

[3] *Al-Deen al-Khâlis* by Muhammad Siddeeq Hasan al-Qanoohi, al-Bukhâri, 3/446

as he said:

«فَإِنْ أَرَادُوكَ عَلَى خَلْعِهِ فَلَا تَخْلَعْهُ لَهُمْ»

"If they want you to take it off, do not take it off for them."[1]

The words I am going to adhere to it mean I am going to follow that advice.

8- Abu 'Abd-Allâh al-Hâkim narrated with his isnâd going back to Abu Sahlah, the freed slave of 'Aa'ishah ﷺ, that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Call for me - or I wish there was here with me - one of my companions." She said: I said: Abu Bakr? He said: "No." I said: 'Umar? He said: "No." I said: Your cousin 'Ali? He said: "No." I said: Then 'Uthmân? He said: "Yes." So 'Uthmân came and he said (to 'Aa'ishah): "Get up (and leave us)." The Prophet ﷺ started whispering to 'Uthmân and his colour changed. He (the narrator) said: Then when the day of the siege came, we said: Will you not fight? He said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me some advice and I will adhere to it.[2]

This hadeeth and the one before it both point to the legitimacy of 'Uthmân's caliphate. Whoever rejects his caliphate and does not believe that he is one of the people of Paradise and martyrs, and speaks disrespectfully of him is beyond the pale of faith and Islam.[3]

9- Another indication of the legitimacy of his caliphate is the report narrated by al-Bukhâri with his isnâd from 'Ibn 'Umar ﷺ who said: At the time of the Prophet ﷺ we did not regard anyone as equal to Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmân, then after that we left the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and did not differentiate

---

[1] *Fadâ'il as-Sahâbah,* 1/605 – its *isnâd* is *saheeh; at-Tirmidhi,* 5/295

[2] *Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi,* by Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Mubârakfoori, 10/209 *at-Tirmidhi,* (3705)

[3] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah,* 1/605 –its *isnâd* is *saheeh; al-Mustadrak,* 3/99–the hadeeth has a *saheeh isnâd* although they (al-Bukhâri and Muslim) did not narrate it, and al-Dhahabi agreed with him.

[4] *Al-Deen al-Khâlis,* 3/446

between them.[1] This indicates that Allâh had instilled in their hearts the order of caliphs which He had ordained for after His Prophet ﷺ had died.[2]

Ibn Taymiyah said: This hadeeth tells us what the Sahâbah believed at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, that Abu Bakr was the best, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmân. It was narrated that the Prophet ﷺ heard about that and did not deny it. So this superiority is proven by the text, and even if that were not the case, it would still be proven by the attitude of the Muhâjireen and Ansâr at the time of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, without any disapproval on his part, and by their attitude when 'Umar died, as they all swore allegiance to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân without any materialistic motive and without fear, and no one disagreed with his being appointed caliph.[3]

All the texts that we have quoted here offer strong evidence that the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ was legitimate and there is no doubt concerning that and no conflict among those who adhere to the Qur'ân and Sunnah, to whom nothing brings greater joy than adhering to them, namely *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah.* Every Muslim is required to believe that the caliphate of 'Uthmân was legitimate and he must accept fully the texts which indicate that.[4]

Consensus concerning the caliphate of 'Uthmân

The companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and those who came after them and followed their way, Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah, are agreed that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was the most qualified of people to become caliph after 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ, and no one objected or disagreed with that. Rather they all

[1] *Al-Bukhâri, Kitâb Fadâ'il Ashâb al-Nabi,* no. 3698

[2] *'Aqeedah Ahl al-Sunnah,* 2/664

[3] *Manhâj as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, 3/165

[4] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah fi'l-Sahâbah al-Kirâm* by Dr. Nâsir ibn 'Ali 'Aayid Hasan al-Shaykh, 2/664

submitted to that because he was the best of Allâh's creation after the two Shaykhs Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them both), and a number of scholars of hadeeth and others narrated that there was consensus on the legitimacy of 'Uthmân's caliphate after 'Umar. These reports include the following[1] :

1- The report of Ibn Abi Shaybah with his isnâd going back to Hârith ibn Mudarrib who said: I performed Hajj during the caliphate of 'Umar and they did not doubt that the caliphate would pass to 'Uthmân after him.[2]

2- Abu Na'eem al-Asbahâni narrated with his isnâd going back to Hudhayfah that he said: I was standing with 'Umar, my knee touching his knee, and he said: Who do you think the people will appoint? I said: The people have already decided on Ibn 'Affân.[3]

3- Al-Hâfiz al-Dhahabi narrated that Shareek ibn 'Abd-Allâh al-Qâdi said: The Prophet ﷺ died and the Muslims appointed Abu Bakr as his successor; if they had known that there was anyone better than him among them, then they would have deceived (the ummah, by doing that). Then Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar as his successor and was a man of truth and justice. When he was dying, he delegated the matter (of succession) to a council of six men, who agreed on 'Uthmân. If they had known that there was anyone better than him among them, then they would have deceived us.[4]

All these reports clearly indicate that it was well established among the companions of the Prophet ﷺ that 'Uthmân was more qualified to succeed to the caliphate when 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ was still alive, because they already knew and had learned from the texts which spoke of his position in the order (of caliphs) that

[1] op. cit., 2/665

[2] *al-Musannaf*, 14/665

[3] *Kitâb al-Imâmah wa'l-Radd 'ala al-Râfidah*, p. 306

[4] *Mizân al-I'tidâl fi Naqd ar-Rijâl*, by Muhammad ibn 'Uthmân al-Dhahabi, 2/273

he would become caliph after 'Umar ﷺ, and because they knew that he was the best of all the people after Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them both).[1]

4- Ibn Sa'd narrated with his isnâd going back to al-Nazzâl ibn Subrah ﷺ who said: 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood said, when 'Uthmân was appointed as caliph: We have appointed as caliph the best of those who are left, and we did not fail to select the best.[2]

5- al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Za'farâni said: I heard al-Shâfa'i say: The people were unanimously agreed on the caliphate of Abu Bakr, and Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar as his successor, then he delegated a council of six men to appoint one of their number, and they appointed 'Uthmân (may Allâh be pleased with them all).[3] Abu Hâmid Muhammad al-Maqdisi narrated some words which he attributed to Imam al-Shâfa'i: You should know that the rightful ruler after 'Umar ﷺ was 'Uthmân ﷺ. That is because the members of the shoora council delegated the task of choosing the caliph to 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf and he chose 'Uthmân ﷺ, and the Sahâbah ﷺ were unanimously agreed on that. The people approved of what 'Abd al-Rahmân did, and 'Uthmân led the people in the path of truth and ruled with justice until he was martyred.[4]

6- Ibn Taymiyah narrated that Imam Ahmad said: They did not all agree to swear allegiance to anyone as they all agreed to swear allegiance to 'Uthmân.[5]

7- Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari said: The caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ after 'Umar ﷺ is proven because he was chosen by the members of the shoora council who were appointed by 'Umar. They chose

---

[1] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah fi'l-Sahâbah al-Kirâm,* by Dr. Nâsir ibn 'Ali 'Aayid, 2/666

[2] *at-Tabaqât al-Kubra,* 3/63

[3] *Manâqib ash-Shâfa'i* by al-Bayhaqi, 1/434, 435

[4] *al-Radd 'ala al-Râfidah,* p. 319, 320

[5] *Manhâj as-Sunnah,* 3/166; *as-Sunnah* by al-Khallâl, p. 320

him and approved of his leadership, and they were unanimously agreed about his virtue and justice.[1]

8- 'Uthmân al-Sabooni said, explaining the belief of the salaf and of the scholars of hadeeth concerning the order of the caliphs, after mentioning that they said that the caliphate of Abu Bakr came first, then 'Umar: Then came the caliphate of 'Uthmân by the consensus of the shoora council and all the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and with their approval, thus he became the caliph who was in charge.[2]

9- Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (ﷺ) said: All the Muslims swore allegiance to 'Uthmân and no one held back. When the prominent people and people of authority and power swore allegiance to him, he became the ruler. If 'Abd al-Rahmân had sworn allegiance to him but 'Ali and other prominent and powerful Sahâbah had not done so, he would not have become the ruler. But 'Umar appointed six men to the shoora council - 'Uthmân, 'Ali, Talhah, az-Zubayr, Sa'd and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf, then Talhah, az-Zubayr and Sa'd withdrew from the race willingly, leaving 'Uthmân, 'Ali and 'Abd al-Rahmân, who did not withdraw but he was delegated to select one of the other two. For three days during which 'Abd al-Rahmân swore that he did not sleep much, he consulted the first Muslims and those who had followed them in truth. He consulted the commanders of the troops who had gone for Hajj with 'Umar that year. The Muslims suggested to him that 'Uthmân should be appointed caliph, and he said that they all favoured 'Uthmân, so they swore allegiance to him, not because of something that he gave them or because they were afraid of him. Hence more than one of the salaf and imams, such as Ayoob al-Sakhtiyâni, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Dâraqutni and others said: Whoever prefers 'Ali over 'Uthmân has thought badly of the Muhâjireen and Ansâr. This is another sign of 'Uthmân's superiority, because they appointed him as

---

[1] *al-Inâbah 'an Usool al-Diyânah,* p. 68

[2] *'Aqeedat al-Salaf wa Ashâb al-Hadeeth dimna al-Risâlah al-Minbariyyah,* 1/139

their leader willingly and on the basis of shoora.[1]

10- al-Hâfiz Ibn Katheer (ﷺ) narrated that there was consensus among the Sahâbah about the appointment of 'Uthmân ﷺ as caliph and he reported that the members of the shoora council delegated the matter to 'Abd al-Rahmân, for him to work out for the Muslims who was the best of them to be appointed to this position. He asked those whom he could ask of the shoora council members, and others, and they did not suggest anyone but 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. He said to 'Ali: If I do not appoint you, who do you suggest? He said: 'Uthmân. And he said to 'Uthmân: If I do not appoint you, who do you suggest? He said: 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib. It seems that this was before the matter was limited to three people and 'Abd al-Rahmân withdrew from the race in order to choose the best candidate.

Then 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf began to consult the people about these two and he collected the opinions of both the ordinary Muslims and their leaders, consulting them in groups and individually, secretly and openly, even consulting the women in seclusion from behind their curtains and asking the children in their schools. He even asked the travellers and Bedouin who came to Madînah during those three days. He did not get much sleep, rather he spent his time in prayer and supplication, seeking guidance and asking wise people. He did not find anyone suggesting that anyone was better than 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. On the fourth day after the death of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, he came to the house of his nephew al-Miswar ibn Makhramah and told him to call 'Ali and 'Uthmân for him. So he called them and they came to 'Abd al-Rahmân. He told them that he had asked the people and he did not find anyone who suggested that anyone was better than either of them, then he took a solemn promise from each of them that if he was appointed he would be just, and if he was not appointed, that he would hear and obey. Then he went out to the mosque, wearing the head cover that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

[1] *Minhâj as-Sunnah, 1/134*

had put on him, and with a sword by his side. He sent for the most prominent people among the Muhâjireen and Ansâr, and the call went out to the people at large: *As-Salâtu jâmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin). The mosque filled with people and was so crowded that 'Uthmân could not find a place to sit except at the back, and he was a very shy man. 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf ascended the minbar of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, where he stood for a long time and said a lengthy du'â' that the people could not hear. Then he spoke and said: O people, I have asked you secretly and openly about your leader, and I did not find suggesting that anyone was better than either of these two men, 'Ali and 'Uthmân. Come here, O 'Ali. He came and stood beneath the minbar, then 'Abd al-Rahmân took him by the hand and said: Will you swear allegiance to me in accordance with the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Prophet and the deeds of Abu Bakr and 'Umar? He said: By Allâh, no, but on the basis of my efforts and ability (i.e., I will do my best). He let go of his hand and said: Come here, O 'Uthmân. He took him by the hand and said: Will you swear allegiance to me in accordance with the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Prophet and the deeds of Abu Bakr and 'Umar? He said: By Allâh, yes. He looked up at the ceiling of the mosque, still holding 'Uthmân's hand, and said: O Allâh, listen and bear witness; O Allâh, listen and bear witness; O Allâh, listen and bear witness. O Allâh, that which was on my shoulders I place on the shoulders of 'Uthmân. The people crowded around, swearing their allegiance to 'Uthmân, until they surrounded him beneath the minbar. 'Abd al-Rahmân sat down where the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to sit and 'Uthmân sat beneath him on the second step, and the people came to him and swore allegiance to him, and 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib swore allegiance to him first - or it was said that he was the second to do so.[1]

These reports, all of which mention the consensus of all these leaders, offer definitive proof that the oath of allegiance to 'Uthmân as caliph was done with the consensus of all the Sahâbah

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/159-161

and no one disagreed or objected to that.[1]

Ruling on preferring 'Ali over 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

The view of *Ahl al-Sunnah* is that the one who prefers 'Ali over Abu Bakr and 'Umar is a misguided innovator, and the one who prefers 'Ali over 'Uthmân is mistaken, but they did not regard him as misguided or an innovator[2] , although one of the scholars spoke harshly about the one who prefers 'Ali over 'Uthmân, as he said: The one who prefers 'Ali over 'Uthmân is claiming that the companions of the Messenger ﷺ betrayed the trust when they chose 'Uthmân over 'Ali.[3]

Ibn Taymiyah said: *Ahl al-Sunnah* are agreed that 'Uthmân is of a higher status, although this issue - the issue of 'Uthmân and 'Ali - is not a basic issue such that the one who differs concerning it is regarded as misguided, according to the majority of *Ahl al-Sunnah.* The issue concerning which the one who differs is regarded as is misguided is the issue of caliphate. That is because they believe that the caliph after the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmân, then 'Ali, and whoever criticized the caliphate of any of these leaders is more misguided than his people's donkey.[4]

He mentioned the comments of the scholars about the issue of preferring 'Ali over 'Uthmân, concerning which there are two reports:

The first is that this is not acceptable. The one who prefers 'Ali over 'Uthmân has transgressed beyond the Sunnah and introduced an innovation, because he disagreed with the consensus of the Sahâbah. Hence it was said that the one who prefers 'Ali over 'Uthmân has thought badly of the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr*. This was narrated from more than one scholar,

---

[1] *'Aqeedah Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamâ'ah fi'l-Sahâbah il-Karâm,* by Dr. Nâsir ibn 'Ali 'Aayid, 2/671

[2] *Majmoo' al-Fatâwa,* 3/101, 102

[3] *Hiqbah min al-Tareekh* by 'Uthmân al-Khamees, p. 66

[4] *Majmoo'ah al-Fatâwa,* 3/101, 102

including Ayyoob as-Sakhtiyâni, Ahmad ibn Hanbal and al-Dâraqutni.

The second view is that the one who prefers 'Ali is not to be regarded as an innovator, because 'Uthmân and 'Ali are so close in status.[1]



[1] op. cit., 4/367

'Uthmân's method of ruling

When the oath of allegiance was sworn to 'Uthmân as caliph, he stood before the people and declared his approach to ruling, explaining that he would follow the guidelines of the Qur'ân and Sunnah and follow in the footsteps of the two Shaykhs (i.e., Abu Bakr and 'Umar). He also stated in his speech that he was going to run the people's affairs with forbearance and wisdom, but he would accept no compromise with regard to *hadd* punishments that must be carried out. Then he warned them against feeling content with worldly things and being tempted by worldly trivia, lest that lead them to compete with one another and stir up grudges and resentment among them, which would in turn lead to division and disunity in the ummah. 'Uthmân ﷺ was looking with insight to the future and at the turmoil that might emerge in the ummah as the result of whims and desires and of striving and competing in the accumulation of worldly wealth.[1]

He said:

I have been given a responsibility and I have accepted it. Verily I am a follower (of the Sunnah) and not an innovator. I promise you that in addition to following the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ, I will do three other things:

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/392

following the example of those who came before me with regard to what you have agreed upon and decided, and what is decided by good people openly, and not interfering with you except when a *hadd* punishment is required. This world is tempting and it makes itself attractive to people, so that many people are inclined towards it. Do not be content with this world and do not put your trust in it, for it is not trustworthy. Understand that these worldly temptations will not go away unless you ignore them.[1]

With regard to what some people say, that when 'Uthmân gave his first speech he was tongue-tied and did not know what to say until he said: O people, the first day is difficult but if I live I shall deliver a proper speech, this is something that was mentioned by the author of *al-'Aqd al-Fareed*[2] and others who narrated interesting stories, but its isnâd is not authentic.[3]

'Uthmân's letters to his agents, governors and commanders, and to the people at large

'Uthmân retained the agents appointed by 'Umar, and he did not dismiss any of them for a full year, on the advice of 'Umar ﷺ. The one who studies the letters that he sent to the governors, zakâh-collectors and commanders will see the policy according to which he would deal with the ummah's affairs.[4]

The first letter written by 'Uthmân to all his governors

"Allâh has commanded rulers to be shepherds; He did not command them to be money-collectors. The attitude of the earliest leaders of this ummah was that of shepherds, not money-collectors. Soon you will find your leaders becoming money-

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/443

[2] What is meant is Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi al-Andalusi, the author of *al-'Aqd al-Fareed*, which is a book that narrates tales and stories, but pays no attention to the soundness of the reports and their chains of narrators,.

[3] *Khilâfah 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Dr. as-Sulami, p. 34, 35; this report was narrated via al-Wâqidi and it is *matrook*.

[4] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah* by Dr. Muhammad Ahmazoon, 1/393

collectors, not shepherds. Once that happens, there will be no more modesty, trustworthiness or honesty. The best way of running the people's affairs is to examine the Muslims' situation, find out what their dues are and give them to them, and take from them what is due from them. Then go to *ahl al-dhimmah* and give them what is due to them and take from them what is due from them. Then confront the enemy and seek to defeat them by means of sincerity."[1]

What we see in this letter is that 'Uthmân confirmed the duties of his governors in the regions towards the people under their jurisdiction. He made it clear that their mission was not to collect wealth; rather it was to take care of the interests of the people. For that reason he explained the way to run the affairs of the ummah, by taking what was due from people, and giving them what was due to them, thus the affairs of the ummah would be sound. If they were to turn into money-collectors with no aim but the collection of wealth, then modesty would be lost, as would trustworthiness and honesty.[2] In his letter to the governors, 'Uthmân focused on the values of political, social and economic justice, by giving people their dues and taking what they owed, and he established the importance of taking care of the people's affairs and not focusing on the collection and accumulation of wealth.[3]

He also pointed out what would happen if the governors turned from shepherds into money-collectors: that would lead to a loss of good morals and attitudes such as modesty, trustworthiness and loyalty. That is because there is a sublime connection between the ruler and his people, which is supported by the agreement of all on one goal, which is seeking the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. The governor is striving for this goal by means of obedience, loyalty, honesty and trust that he offers to his ruler,

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/244

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah*, 1/393

[3] *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Dr. Hamdi Shaheen, p. 246.

and the modesty to which 'Uthmân refers remains as a common factor among all, preventing them from committing abhorrent deeds or hurting feelings or causing them any hardship. Then 'Uthmân advised his governors to be just to the people under their control, by taking what is due from them and giving them their rights. And he referred to an important point, which is that fulfilling covenants is one of the greatest means of victory over the enemy. History shows that this sublime attitude caused the Muslim to prevail in the fields of administration and war.[1]

His letter to the commanders of the troops

The first letter that he wrote to the commanders of the troops in the regions was:

"You are the guardians of the Muslims and their shield. 'Umar gave you a particular mission which is not hidden from us, rather it is known to everyone. I do not want to hear that any one of you has changed the deal, lest Allâh replace you with someone else. So watch what you do and I shall try my best to fulfil the mission that Allâh has enjoined on me."[2]

In this letter, 'Uthmân drew attention to the fact that things do not change with the appointment of a new caliph, because the caliphs and their governors are all following the same path, which is the mission of applying Islam in real life. His words, " 'Umar gave you a particular mission which is not hidden from us, rather it is known to everyone" indicate that the rule of those caliphs was based on shoora, which meant that all major issues would be known in detail to the decision-makers. When one ruler departed and another one came, he would follow the same path, because the goals were clear to everyone. His words, "I do not want to hear that any one of you has changed the deal, lest Allâh replace you with someone else" show his clear insight into the laws of Allâh in this world, for Allâh's promise to support and protect His

---

[1] *At-Tareekh al-Islami Mawâqif wa 'Ibar,* by Dr. 'Abd al-'Azeez al-Humaydi, 12/369

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/244

close friends is dependent on their adhering to His laws and submitting to His command. If they change from that, Allâh will change their situation and will replace them with others whom He will support and cause to prevail.[1] Concerning that Allâh says:

﴿لَهُۥ مُعَقِّبَٰتٌ مِّنۢ بَيۡنِ يَدَيۡهِ وَمِنۡ خَلۡفِهِۦ يَحۡفَظُونَهُۥ مِنۡ أَمۡرِ ٱللَّهِۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوۡمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمۡۗ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ ٱللَّهُ بِقَوۡمٖ سُوٓءٗا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُۥۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَالٍ﴾

"For him (each person), there are angels in succession, before and behind him. They guard him by the Command of Allâh. Verily, Allâh will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state (of goodness) themselves (by committing sins and by being ungrateful and disobedient to Allâh). But when Allâh wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning back of it, and they will find besides Him no protector" (*Ar-Ra'd* 13:11)

'Uthmân told them that he was aware of the duties that he had to fulfil so that both ruler and subjects would have a shared sense of duty, and that each of them would feel that he was striving for the sake of his ummah as well as for himself.[2]

His letter to the zakâh collectors

The first letter that he wrote to the zakâh-collectors was:

"Allâh created on the basis of truth and He accepts nothing but that which is based on truth, so take what is due (zakâh) and give people their dues (rights) on the basis of Allâh's teachings. I urge you to adhere to honesty, pay a great deal of attention to it and do not be the first to neglect honesty. Fulfil covenants, and do not wrong orphans or non-Muslims who have a treaty with the

[1] *At-Tareekh al-Islami,* 12/370

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 199

Muslims, for Allâh will be the opponent of the one who wrongs them."[1]

This letter is addressed exclusively to those who are in charge of collecting money and wealth from individuals, to be spent on the public interests of the ummah. 'Uthmân explained to them that Allâh accepts nothing but that which is based on truth, and truth is based on sincerity and fulfilment. Then he pointed out two types of people who are the weakest in the ummah: orphans and dhimmis (non-Muslims who have a treaty with the Muslims), and he urged them to avoid wronging them, for they are under the protection of Allâh.[2] Then he reminded them that if they wronged them, they would be subject to the punishment of Allâh, because He is the opponent of the one who wrongs these weak persons. This points to one aspect of the greatness of Islam, as it promotes supporting those who have been wronged, even if they are non-Muslims living under Muslim protection.[3]

His letter to the masses

"You have achieved what you have achieved by following (Qur'ân and Sunnah), so do not let worldly affairs distract you from what matters. This ummah will start to follow innovations after three things happen to you: when all kinds of luxury are attained, when the children of your female slaves reach puberty, and when the Bedouin and non-Arabs start reading the Qur'ân, for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«الْكُفْرُ فِي الْعُجْمَةِ، فَإِذَا اسْتَعْجَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَمْرٌ تَكَلَّفُوا وَابْتَدَعُوا»

'Kufr results from not understanding Arabic; when they are faced with something that they do not understand, they will make it complicated and introduce innovations.'"[4]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/244

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 198

[3] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 20/371

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/245

In this letter we see that 'Uthmân ﷺ was keen for the common folk of the ummah to follow that which is clear and not to make things complicated or introduce innovations. He warned them that the situation would change if three things happened together: the attainment of all kinds of luxury, which would make people careless and make them enjoy ease and lose the incentive to strive hard, and would make them lazy and idle, so that they would lose their energy and resolve; when the children of their female slaves reached puberty - and during their history the ummah came to realize the effect that these people had on their Muslim society in political, social and religious terms; and when the Bedouin and non-Arabs read the Qur'ân. What 'Uthmân meant by that was the harshness and hard-heartedness which is in the nature of the Bedouin, so the guidance of the Qur'ân would not penetrate deep into their hearts. And as for the non-Arabs, they had their legacy of deeply-rooted traditions and beliefs, and ancient customs that created a barrier between them and their being affected and guided by the Qur'ân. The influence of the Bedouin was manifested in the Khâriji sect, who were a hard-hearted type of people; they read the Qur'ân more than anyone else, yet they were the furthest removed from its guidance. Then came the influence of the non-Arabs, with the innovations that they introduced and their complicated views and opinions, which had a very bad effect on Muslim beliefs and from which stemmed the misguided sects who played such a dangerous role in Islamic history.[1]

The highest authority in the state

'Uthmân declared that the highest authority in the state was the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, and the example of the two Shaykhs (Abu Bakr and 'Umar). He said: "... I *am a follower, not an innovator. After the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ, I promise you three things: I will follow*

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 199

those who came before me in matters on which you were unanimously agreed..."[1]

1. The primary source is the Book of Allâh. Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِمَآ أَرَىٰكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن لِّلْخَآئِنِينَ خَصِيمًا﴾

"Surely, We have sent down to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) the Book (this Qur'ân) in truth that you might judge between men by that which Allâh has shown you (i.e. has taught you through Divine Revelation), so be not a pleader for the treacherous" (*An-Nisa'* 4:105)

The Book of Allâh includes all shar'i rulings that have to do with various aspects of life, as well as basic principles and definitive rules to set straight all aspects of life. The Qur'ân tells the Muslims all the principles they need in order to establish their state.

2. The secondary source is the Sunnah, from which the Islamic constitution derives its principles and from which can be learned the practical way of implementing the rulings of the Qur'ân.[2]

3. Following the example of the two Shaykhs. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«اقْتَدُوا بِاللَّذَيْنِ مِنْ بَعْدِي أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ»

"Follow the example of those who come after me: Abu Bakr and 'Umar."[3]

The state led by 'Uthmân submitted to sharee'ah, and

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/443

[2] *Fiqh at-Tamkeen fi'l-Qur'ân il-Kareem* by as-Sallâbi, p. 432

[3] *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhi,* (3662) 3/200

sharee'ah superseded all human laws. This clearly shows us that the Islamic state is a state based on sharee'ah, and all aspects of the state submit to the rulings of this law. The ruler is restricted by these rulings and cannot operate outside of them.[1] In the state ruled by 'Uthmân and in the society of the Sahâbah, sharee'ah came above all, and rulers and subjects alike submitted to it. Obedience to the caliph was within the framework of obedience to Allâh. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«لَا طَاعَةَ فِي الْمَعْصِيَةِ، إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ»

"There is no obedience in the case of sin; obedience is only with regard to that which is right and proper."[2]

The fact that sharee'ah dominated all affairs of state is one of the characteristics of the Rightly-Guided caliphate. The government of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs was distinguished from other governments by a number of characteristics, including the following:

- The government of the caliph had responsibility over all aspects of life, i.e., it was based on integration between religious and worldly affairs.
- The government of the caliph was committed to implementing the rulings of sharee'ah.
- The caliphate was based on the unity of the Muslim world.[3]

The ummah's right to call the caliph to account

Something concerning which there is no doubt is that the authority of the caliph is not absolute, rather it is restricted by two things:

1- He cannot go against any clear text of the Qur'ân or Sunnah,

[1] *Nizâm al-Hukm fi'l-Islam*, p. 227

[2] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 7257

[3] *Fiqh al-Khilâfah* by al-Sanhoori, p. 80

and any decision he takes should be in harmony with the spirit and aims of sharee'ah.

2- He should not go against that upon which the Muslim ummah is agreed or go against the will of the ummah.

The basis for that is that the caliph is the representative of the *ummah* and his authority is derived from that, so it is up to the *ummah* to determine the limits of this authority. The ummah could, at any time, increase this authority or limit it and put restrictions on it whenever there is an interest to be served by doing so or to guarantee adherence to the commands of Allâh and serve the interests of the ummah.[1] That may be achieved through the shoora council of the ummah. 'Uthmân ﷺ affirmed the *ummah's* right to bring the caliph to account when he said: If you find in the book of Allâh that you should put my legs in irons then put my legs in irons.[2] When some group criticized some of his mistakes - as they claimed - in the way he ran the affairs of government and appointed people to positions of authority, and groups assembled to bring him to account for his actions, he submitted to their demand (to question him) and he did not deny them this right, and he showed that he was quite prepared to put right whatever mistakes he could have made.[3]

Shoora

One of the basic principles of the Islamic state is the idea that the leaders and rulers of the state should consult with the Muslims and submit to their demands and opinions, and allow the system of shoora to work. Allâh says:

﴿فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ﴾

[1] *al-Dawlah wa'l-Siyâdah,* by Dr. Fathi 'Abd al-Kareem, p. 268

[2] *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad, al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyyah,* no. 524

[3] *al-Dawlah wa'l-Siyâdah,* p. 379

"And by the Mercy of Allâh, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allâh's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allâh, certainly, Allâh loves those who put their trust (in Him)" (*Aal 'Imrân* 3:159)

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾

"And those who answer the Call of their Lord [i.e. to believe that He is the only One Lord (Allâh), and to worship none but Him Alone], and perform As-Salâh (Iqâmat-as-Salâh), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them" (*Ash-Shoora* 42:38)

'Uthmân ﷺ established a shoora council for his state, composed of the senior companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and the Muhâjiroon and Ansâr.[1] 'Uthmân made a request of the governors and commanders, saying:

"Continue as you were when you were working for 'Umar, and do not change. Whatever decision you want to take, refer it to us and we will gather the ummah for consultation then we will give you an answer."[2]

His commanders committed themselves to that, so when they wanted to launch a campaign or make any advances in the conquests, they would ask him for permission and consult him, and he in turn would assemble the Sahâbah and consult them as to how to make preparations, take decisions and make proper plans, then he would give them permission to go ahead.[3] 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi Sarh wrote to the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ asking him for

[1] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah fi'l-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah*, 1/277

[2] op. cit., 1/277, quoting from *Tareekh at-Tabari*

[3] *Futooh Misr*, p. 83

permission to penetrate deeper into Africa, because the islands belonging to the Byzantines were close to the Muslims. The caliph 'Uthmân gave him permission for that after consulting others, and he urged the people to join him.[1] When Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân wanted to conquer the islands of Cyprus and Rhodes, he did the same thing, consulting the leaders of the central command, and he asked him for permission. The answer did not come until after he held a meeting of the shoora council and discussed the issue, then he gave him permission.[2]

The commanders of the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ used to consult with one another[3] with regard to directing battles, just as 'Uthmân consulted the senior Sahâbah with regard to the compilation of the Qur'ân, 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Umar's killing of al-Hormuzân, the procedures to put an end to turmoil (fitnah), court judgements and other issues and events which we will discuss below in sha Allâh.

Justice and equality

One of the aims of Islamic rule is to lay the foundations of the Islamic system which will establish a Muslim society. Among the most important of these foundations are justice and equality. 'Uthmân wrote to the people in the regions, saying: "Enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. No believer should subject himself to humiliation, for I will be with the weak against the strong so long as he has been wronged, in sha Allâh."[4]

His policy was based on justice in its most sublime form. He carried out the *hadd* punishment on the governor of Kufah, al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah (who was his brother through his mother) when witnesses testified that he had drunk alcohol, and he dismissed him from his post because of that. This will be discussed in detail later on in sha Allâh. And he agreed to appoint

[1] op. cit., p. 183

[2] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah*, 1/278

[3] ibid.

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 4/414

of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari in his stead, because the people of Kufah did not agree to his appointment of Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas as the successor to al-Waleed. It was also narrated that he got angry with a servant of his one day and tweaked his ear until he hurt him. Then he could not sleep that night until after he had called his servant to his room and told him to take revenge by tweaking his ear. The servant refused to obey at first, but 'Uthmân insisted, so he obeyed.[1]

Freedoms

The principle of freedom is one of the basic principles on which rule was based at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. According to this principle, all civil liberties are to be guaranteed to all people, within the framework of Islamic sharee'ah and in such a way that they do not contradict it. The Islamic call for freedom for all people is a comprehensive call, the like of which is very rare in history. At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs civil liberties such as we know them today were guaranteed and protected[2] , such as religious freedom, freedom of movement, the right to safety, the sanctity of one's home, freedom of ownership and freedom of opinion.

Inspection (Hisbah)

'Uthmân ﷺ himself paid attention to the issue of inspection (hisbah) as well as delegating it to others. It is narrated that 'Uthmân took on the task of inspection in many fields, such as the following:

Denouncing the wearing of clothes dyed with safflower

As part of his inspection, 'Uthmân ﷺ denounced Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Tâlib ﷺ for wearing a garment dyed with safflower. It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah ﷺ said: 'Uthmân ﷺ

---

[1] *Nizâm al-Hukm fi 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Hamad Muhammad al-Samad, p. 149

[2] op.cit., p. 157, 158

went to Makkah for *Hajj*. The wife of Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Tâlib entered upon him (Muhammad ibn Ja'far) and spent the night with him, then the next morning he came with traces of perfume on him, wearing a wrapper that was dyed with safflower and had a reddish colour. He caught up with the people in Malal[1] before they moved on. When 'Uthmân ﷺ saw him, he rebuked him and told him off and said: "Are you wearing a garment dyed with safflower when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ forbade that?"[2]

Denunciation of women who go for 'umrah or Hajj during the *'iddah* period

Another example of 'Uthmân's inspection is when he sent back women who had gone out for 'umrah or Hajj when they were still observing 'iddah. Imam 'Abd al-Razzâq narrated that Mujâhid said: 'Umar and 'Uthmân (may Allâh be pleased with them both) used to send back women who were going for Hajj and 'umrah from al-Juhfah and Dhu'l-Hulayfah.[3]

His command to slaughter pigeons

He also forbade people to become preoccupied with keeping pigeons[4] when life became easy for them, and he commanded them to slaughter them. Imam al-Bukhâri narrated that al-Hasan said: I heard 'Uthmân ﷺ enjoining in his *khutbah* the killing of dogs and the slaughtering of pigeons.[5]

His objection to playing with dice

'Uthmân ﷺ used to forbid playing with dice, and he commanded whoever had them in his house to burn them or break them. Imam al-Bayhaqi narrated from Zubayd ibn al-Salt that he heard 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ say when he was on the

[1] Malal: a place between Makkah and Madînah

[2] *al-Musnad*, no. 517. Ahmad Shâkir said: Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*. See: *Ta'leeqât al-Shaykh 'ala'l-Musnad*, 1/384

[3] *al-Musannaf*, no. 12071

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/415

[5] *al-Adab al-Mufrad, Bâb Dhabh al-Hamâm*, no. 1307

minbar: O people, beware of gambling - meaning dice - for I have been told that some of you have them in your houses. Whoever has them in his house, let him burn them or break them. And 'Uthmân said on another occasion when he was on the minbar: O people, I spoke to you about these dice, and I have not seen you taking them out. I was thinking of ordering that firewood be brought, then I would send men to the houses of those who have them in their houses, to burn them down with them inside.[1]

His expulsion from Madînah of those whom he saw doing evil or unsheathing their weapons

'Uthmân would denounce those whom he saw committing evil or carrying weapons, and he would expel them from Madînah. It was narrated that Sâlim ibn 'Abdullâh ﷺ said: 'If 'Uthmân saw any of them committing evil or unsheathing a weapon, wielding a stick or anything more than that, openly, he would banish them.[2]

Beating anyone who showed disrespect towards the paternal uncle of the Prophet ﷺ

During his caliphate he beat a man who, during a dispute, expressed disrespect towards al-'Abbâs ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib, the paternal uncle of the Messenger ﷺ. He was asked about the reason why he beat him and he said: "Of course; didn't the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ show a great deal of respect towards his uncle? Do you want me to allow people to show disrespect towards him? The one who does that or approves of it is going against the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."[3]

His prohibition of alcohol because it is the mother of all evils

It was narrated by al-Nasâ'i and al-Bayhaqi in their *Sunans*

---

[1] *al-Sunan al-Kubra, Kitâb al-Shahâdât,* 10/215

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/416, Most of this section is taken from *al-Hisbah fi'l-'Asr al-Nabawi wa'l-'Ahd al-Râshidi,* by Dr. Fadl Ilâhi.

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/417

that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân said: Avoid alcohol, for it is the mother of all evils. There was a man in the past who was a devoted worshipper, but a woman fell in love with him and wanted to tempt him. She sent her slave girl to him, to tell him that she was calling him to give testimony. She went with the slave girl, who started to close every door behind him as he entered, until he came to a beautiful woman, with whom was a boy and a vessel of wine. She said: By Allâh, I did not call you here to give testimony, but I called you to have intercourse with me, or to drink a cup of this wine, or to kill this boy. He said: Pour me a cup of this wine. She poured a cup for him and he said: Give me more. Then he did not stop until he had had intercourse with her and killed the boy. So avoid alcohol, for by Allâh faith and addiction to alcohol cannot co-exist but one of them will soon expel the other.[1]

Khutbahs and sayings of 'Uthmân

His *khutbah* about preparing for the Day of Resurrection.

Al-Hasan al-Basri (ﷺ) said: 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân delivered a speech. He praised and glorified Allâh, then he said: O people, fear Allâh for fear of Allâh is a great treasure. The smartest of people is the one who checks himself and strives for that which comes after death, and gains from the light of Allâh light to illuminate his grave. Everyone should worry lest Allâh resurrect him blind when he had sight before. A few concise words are sufficient for the wise man, but the deaf person will be called from a distant place. You should realize that the one with whom Allâh is will not fear anything, but the one against whom Allâh is, what hope can he have?[2]

It was narrated from 'Uthmân ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ الجَمَّاءَ لَتُقَصُّ مِنَ القَرْنَاءِ يَوْمَ القِيَامَةِ»

---

[1] *Sunan an-Nasâ'i, Kitâb al-Ashribah; Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Uthmân*, p. 52

[2] *Saheeh al-Tawtheeq fi Seerah wa Hayât Dhi'n-Noorayn*, p. 107

"The hornless animal will settle its score with the horned one on the Day of Resurrection."[1]

His reminder about adopting a good attitude

'Uthmân ﷺ said: By Allâh we were with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on journeys and at home. He used to visit our sick ones, attend our funerals, go out on campaigns with us and share with us during lean times and in times of plenty. There are people who want to remind me of his Sunnah when probably none of them even saw him.[2]

c. Sayings that became well known among the people

'Uthmân said:

- If our hearts were truly pure, we would never have our fill of the words of your Lord.[3]
- No one conceals something in his heart, but Allâh causes it to be seen on his face or in a slip of the tongue.[4]
- Things may be achieved by means of authority that cannot be achieved by means of the Qur'ân.[5]
- 'Uthmân ﷺ did not attach much importance to this world, of which he said: Concern with this world is darkness in the heart, but concern with the Hereafter is light in the heart.[6]
- It is sufficient for you that the one who envies you is distressed at the time of your joy.[7]
- During the days of turmoil he ﷺ said: I ask Allâh for forgiveness if I have done wrong, and I have already forgiven if I have been wronged by others.[8]

---

[1] *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyyah, Musnad Ahmad,* no. 520 (1/72)
[2] *Saheeh al-Tawtheeq fi Seerah wa Hayât Dhi'n-Noorayn,* p. 107
[3] *Jâmi' al-'Uloom wa'l-Hikam,* p. 363
[4] *Farâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafa' al-Kirâm,* p. 269
[5] *al-Kâmil fi'l-Lughah wa'l-Adab,* 1/157
[6] *al-Isti'âd li Yawm al-Mi'âd,* p. 9
[7] *Majma' al-Amthâl* by al-Maydâni, 2/453
[8] *Tareekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât,* p. 171

- Everything has something to undermine it, and every blessing has something to diminish it. The thing that undermines this religion and diminishes this blessing is those who criticize a great deal and those who stab in the back; they show you what you want to see and they conceal that which you dislike. They are wicked like ostriches.[1]
- When 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr came with news of the conquest of North Africa, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ told him to stand up and give a speech. When he had finished speaking, 'Uthmân said: Marry women for what their fathers and brothers are, for I have not seen any of the sons of Abu Bakr who are more like him than this one.[2] The mother of 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr was Asma' bint Abi Bakr, and he meant that Ibn az-Zubayr was like his grandfather in courage, bravery and eloquence.[3]
- No one does a good deed but Allâh will make it show on him.[4]
- The believer has five types of fear. The first is that Allâh may take his faith away from him; the second is that the recording angels may write down something that may expose him on the Day of Resurrection; the third is that the shaytân may cause his deeds to become invalid; the fourth is that the Angel of Death may come to him without warning; and the fifth is that this world may tempt him and distract him from the Hereafter.[5]
- I have found the sweetness of worship in four things. The first is in performing the obligatory acts of worship enjoined by Allâh; the second is in avoiding the things forbidden by Allâh; the third is enjoining that which is good, seeking the

[1] *Majma' al-Amthâl* by al-Maydâni, 20/453

[2] *al-Bayân wa't-Tabyeen*, 2/95

[3] *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 271

[4] *az-Zuhd* by Imam Ahmad, p. 185

[5] *Farâ'id al-Kalâm li'l-Khulafa' al-Kirâm*, p. 278

reward of Allâh; and the fourth is forbidding that which is evil, fearing the wrath of Allâh.[1]

'Uthmân and poets and poetry

The sources tell us only a little about 'Uthmân's relationship with poetry and poets, even though the duration of his caliphate was relatively long. The little we know tells us that he adhered to the general guidelines of Islamic belief as laid down by the Messenger ﷺ, which were followed before him by Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq and 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ). Undoubtedly each of them had his own interest in literature. Abu Bakr was famous for his knowledge of lineages, his broad general knowledge, his good company and his recital of poetry. 'Umar was famous for encouraging people to learn poetry. No issue was referred to him but he could quote a pertinent line of poetry, and he was also a poet himself. As for 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ, it is not narrated that he had any deep interest in poetry or any strong relationship with the poets. We know that the poets used to swarm around the doors of the rulers, hoping to earn their pleasure and gifts. But in the days of 'Uthmân we see that the poets left the major cities and Madînah, and preferred to go back to the desert.[2] The books of literature and history quote some of the verses that are attributed to 'Uthmân or that he used to recite.

Because the third Rightly-Guided Caliph did not pay a great deal of attention to poetry and the poets were not close to him, his murder by thugs opened the door to the flourishing of 'Abbasid poetry that would effectively become a form of media in the coming Islamic eras. When he was murdered, many of the poets among the *Sahâbah* wrote moving eulogies. This will be discussed in the succeeding chapters, *in sha Allâh*.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] ibid.

[2] *Adar Sadr al-Islam,* by Wâdih al-Samad, p. 99

His main characteristics

'Uthmân is regarded as a born leader, one who was devoted to Allâh. In describing his character, we will mention some points in brief and discuss others in detail. Among the most important of his characteristics were his deep faith in Allâh and his belief in the Last Day, his knowledge of Islam, his trust in Allâh, exemplary conduct, sincerity, efficiency, courage, chivalry, asceticism, love of sacrifice, humility, willingness to accept advice, forbearance, patience, high ambition, resolve, strong will, justice, problem-solving ability, ability to teach and prepare leaders, and other characteristics. Because of the leadership qualities that Allâh had created in him, he was able to protect the state and suppress rebellions that arose in the conquered lands, and by the grace and support of Allâh he was able to help the ummah achieve its goals. Among the most important of these attributes on which we will try to shed light in this section are the following:

Knowledge and teaching skills

'Uthmân ﷺ is regarded as one of the senior scholars among the Sahâbah with regard to the Holy Qur'ân and Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. We will discuss his efforts in the field of fiqh in the sections on the judiciary, financial institutions and jihad, in sha Allâh. 'Uthmân ﷺ was eager to follow the guidance of the Prophet

ﷺ, Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them both). It was narrated from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr that 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Adiyy ibn al-Khayyâr told him that al-Miswar ibn Makhramah and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn al-Aswad 'Abd Yaghooth said to him: What kept you from speaking to your maternal uncle, the Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Uthmân, about al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, when the people were talking a great deal about what he did? 'Ubayd-Allâh said: I intercepted the caliph 'Uthmân when he went out to pray and I said to him: I want to give you some advice. He said: O man, I seek refuge with Allâh from you. So I went away, then when he had finished praying I sat with al-Miswar and Ibn 'Abd Yaghooth and told them what I had said to the caliph and what he had said to me. They said: You have done what you had to. Whilst I was sitting with them, the messenger of the caliph 'Uthmân came to me and they said to me: Allâh is testing you. I went to 'Uthmân and he said: What is the advice that you wanted to tell me before? I recited the Shahâdah then I said to him: Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, sent Muhammad with the truth and revealed the Book to him, and you were one of those who responded to Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ, and you saw his guidance. The people are talking too much about al-Waleed, so you have to carry out the *hadd* punishment on him. He said to me: O son of my sister, did you meet the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ? I said: No, but the knowledge and certain faith that have reached me are what could reach a virgin in her seclusion. He recited the Shahâdah then he said: Allâh sent Muhammad with the truth, and I was one of those who responded to Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ. I believe in that with which He sent Muhammad ﷺ, then I migrated twice as you said, and I became the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. I swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and by Allâh I was not disobedient or insincere towards him until he passed away. Then Abu Bakr was appointed as his successor, and we swore allegiance to him, and by Allâh I was not disobedient or insincere towards him until he passed away. Then 'Umar was appointed as his successor, and by Allâh I was not disobedient or insincere towards him until he passed

away. Now Allâh has appointed me as his successor, so should I not have authority over you as they had over me? I said: Yes. He said: So what is this talk that I am hearing about among you? As for what you say about al-Waleed, we will investigate it, in sha Allah, and do what is right. He gave al-Waleed forty lashes, and he ordered 'Ali to flog him, so he was the one who flogged him.[1]

'Uthmân ؓ stayed close to the Prophet ﷺ and benefited from his knowledge and guidance, which made him one of the senior scholars of the Sahâbah (ؓ). He ؓ was able to show his people the right way and lead them properly, teaching them their duties and giving them his advice and opinions which were based on his knowledge and experience so that they could advance in the fields of da'wah, leadership, education, *jihad* and preparing to meet Allâh ﷻ.

Some of 'Uthmân's exhortations were included in the speech he gave when he was appointed caliph, in which he said, after praising Allâh and sending blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ: You are in a transient realm which you will soon leave, but you have some of your life left, so hasten before death comes to do the best you can, for death may come to you at any time, morning or evening. This world is very deceiving, so let not this present life deceive you, and let not the chief deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allâh (cf. Fâtir 35:5). Learn from those who have passed away, then strive hard and do not be heedless. Where are those who lived in this world before us, those who tilled the soil and populated the land and enjoyed life for a long time? Did they not depart this life? So do what is good in this world.[2] Allâh says:

﴿وَٱضۡرِبۡ لَهُم مَّثَلَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخۡتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَأَصۡبَحَ هَشِيمٗا تَذۡرُوهُ ٱلرِّيَٰحُۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ مُّقۡتَدِرًا ۝ ٱلۡمَالُ وَٱلۡبَنُونَ زِينَةُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَاۖ وَٱلۡبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيۡرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابٗا وَخَيۡرٌ أَمَلٗا﴾

[1] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah*, 1/597, no, 791. Its isnâd is saheeh.

[2] *Al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/153

"And put forward to them the example of the life of this world : it is like the water (rain) which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, and becomes fresh and green. But (later) it becomes dry and broken pieces, which the winds scatter. And Allâh is Able to do everything. Wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world. But the good righteous deeds that last, are better with your Lord for rewards and better in respect of hope" (*Al-Kahf* 18:45,46)

The focal point in this khutbah delivered by the third caliph 'Uthmân was urging people to turn to Allâh and to turn their backs on this world. This was an appropriate topic for a speech at that time, when Islam was established throughout the world, lands had been conquered, worldly luxuries had become abundant and competition in acquiring worldly things had begun, especially among people other than the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. So these were the right words at the right time.[1]

'Uthmân ﷺ narrated ahâdeeth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ from which the ummah benefited. Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Sulami tells us of a hadeeth that he heard from 'Uthmân and acted upon it. It was narrated from Sa'd ibn 'Ubaydah, from Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Sulami, from 'Uthmân ﷺ, that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«خَيرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ القُرآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ»

"The best of you is the one who learns the Qur'ân and teaches it."[2]

He said: Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân taught the Qur'ân during the caliphate of 'Uthmân and until the time of al-Hajjâj. He said: That is what made me sit down and teach. According to a report narrated from Shu'bah, Abu 'Abd al-Rahmân said: That is what made me sit down and teach, and he used to teach Qur'ân.[3]

[1] *al-Kafâ'ah al-Idâriyyah fi'l-Siyâsah al-Shar'iyyah* by al-Qâdiri, p. 93

[2] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 5027

[3] *al-Khailâfah ar-Râshidah*, by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya, p. 420, 421

'Uthmân narrated ahâdeeth of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to the Muslims, each at the proper time and place. These ahâdeeth include the following:

The importance of *wudoo'*

'Uthmân did *wudoo'* in al-Balât then he said: I shall narrate to you a *hadeeth* that I heard from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, which were it not for a verse in the Book of Allâh I would not narrate it to you. I heard the Prophet ﷺ say:

«مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ دَخَلَ فَصَلَّى، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الصَّلَاةِ الأُخْرَى حَتَّى يُصَلِّيَهَا»

"Whoever does wudoo' and does it well, then goes in and prays, he will be forgiven his sins between one prayer and the next, until he prays it."[1]

His imitation of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in doing *wudoo'*

It was narrated from Hamrân ibn Abân that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân called for water and he did *wudoo'*, rinsing his mouth and nose, then washing his face three times, then his forearms three times each, then wiping his head and the tops of his feet. Then he smiled and said to his companions: Are you not going to ask me why I am smiling? They said: Why are you smiling, O Ameer al-Mu'mineen? He said: I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ calling for water near this spot, then he did wudoo' as I have done, then he smiled and said:

«أَلَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَمَّا أَضْحَكَنِي»

"Are you not going to ask me why I am smiling?"

They said: Why are you smiling, O Messenger of Allâh? He said:

---

[1] *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyyah, Musnad Ahmad,* no. 400 (1/75). Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

«إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا دَعَا بِوَضُوءٍ فَغَسَلَ وَجْهَهُ، حَطَّ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُلَّ خَطِيئَةٍ أَصَابَهَا بِوَجْهِهِ، فَإِذَا غَسَلَ ذِرَاعَيْهِ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ، وَإِنْ مَسَحَ بِرَأْسِهِ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ، وَإِنْ طَهَّرَ قَدَمَيْهِ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ»

"If a person calls for water for wudoo', and washes his face, Allâh will erase every sin caused by his face. When he washes his forearms, the same applies. When he wipes his head, the same applies, and when he cleans his feet, the same applies."[1]

The expiation of *wudoo'*

It was narrated that 'Uthmân said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَنْ أَتَمَّ الْوُضُوءَ كَمَا أَمَرَهُ اللهُ عَزَّوجَلَّ، فَالصَّلَوَاتُ الْمَكْتُوبَاتُ كَفَّارَاتٌ لِمَا بَيْنَهُنَّ»

"Whoever completes wudoo' as enjoined by Allâh (may He be glorified and exalted), the prescribed prayers will be an expiation for whatever comes in between them."[2]

Wudoo', praying two *rak'ahs*, and forgiveness of sins

'Uthmân called for water when he was sitting on a chair. He poured some water on his right hand and washed it, then he put his right hand in the vessel and washed his hands three times, then he washed his face three times and rinsed his mouth and nose. He washed his forearms up to the elbows three times, then he wiped his head, then he washed his feet up to the ankles three times, then he said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ say:

---

[1] *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyyah, Musnad Ahmad,* no. 415 (1/58,59). It is *saheeh li ghayrihi*.

[2] *Al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyyah, Musnad al-Imam Ahmad,* no. 406; (1/57) its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

«مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ نَحْوَ وُضُوئِي هَذَا، ثُمَّ صَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ لَا يُحَدِّثُ نَفْسَهُ فِيهِمَا، غَفَرَ اللهُ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

"Whoever does wudoo' as I have done it, then prays two rak'ahs in which he does not allow his mind to wander, Allâh will forgive him his previous sins."[1]

A word of sincerity and a word of piety

'Uthmân said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ say:

«إِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ كَلِمَةً لَا يَقُولُهَا عَبْدٌ حَقًّا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ إِلَّا حُرِّمَ عَلَى النَّارِ»

"I know a word which no person says sincerely, from the heart, but he will be forbidden to the Fire."

'Umar ibn al-Khattâb said to him: I will tell you what it is. It is the word of sincerity to which Allâh ﷻ will cause Muhammad ﷺ and his companions to adhere, and it is the word of piety which the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ urged his uncle Abu Tâlib to say when he was dying: the testimony that there is no god but Allâh.[2]

Knowledge of Allâh will admit a person to Paradise

It was narrated from 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ مَاتَ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ أَنْ لَاإِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ»

"Whoever dies knowing that there is no god but Allâh will enter Paradise."[3]

The good righteous deeds and the things that endure

It was narrated that Hârith, the freed slave of 'Uthmân, said:

---

[1] Op. cit., no. 418. its *isnâd* is *saheeh* (1/59).

[2] *Musnad Ahmad*, no. 447 (1/63). Its *isnâd* is *qawiy*.

[3] *Musnad Ahmad*, no. 464 (1/65). Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

'Uthmân sat down one day and we sat with him, then the muezzin came to him and he called for water in a vessel which I think could hold a mudd. He did wudoo' then he said: I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ doing wudoo' like this, then he said:

«وَمَنْ تَوَضَّأَ وُضُوئِي هَذَا، ثُمَّ قَامَ فَصَلَّى صَلَاةَ الظُّهْرِ، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا كَانَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ الصُّبْحِ، ثُمَّ صَلَّى الْعَصْرَ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ صَلَاةِ الظُّهْرِ، ثُمَّ صَلَّى الْمَغْرِبَ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ، ثُمَّ صَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ صَلَاةِ الْمَغْرِبِ، ثُمَّ لَعَلَّهُ أَنْ يَبِيتَ يَتَمَرَّغُ لَيْلَتَهُ، ثُمَّ إِنْ قَامَ فَتَوَضَّأَ وَصَلَّى الصُّبْحَ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ، وَهُنَّ الْحَسَنَاتُ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ»

"Whoever does wudoo' as I have done it, then prays Zuhr prayer will be forgiven for what came between it and Fajr, then prays 'Asr, will be forgiven for what came between it and Zuhr prayer, then prays Maghrib, will be forgiven for what came between it and 'Asr prayer, then prays 'Isha', will be forgiven for what came between it and Maghrib prayer. Then if he spends the night engaging in intimacy, then he gets up and does wudoo' and prays Fajr, he will be forgiven for what came between it and 'Isha' prayer. These are the good righteous deeds that take away bad deeds."

They said: These are the good righteous deeds; what are the things that endure, O 'Uthmân? He said: They are (the phrases) *Lâ ilâha ill-Allâh* (there is no god but Allâh), *Subhân Allâh* (Glory be to Allâh), *al-hamdu Lillah* (praise be to Allâh), *Allâhu akbar* (Allâh is Most Great) and *Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh* (There is no power and no strength except with Allâh).[1]

Seriousness of telling lies about the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

[1] *Musnad Ahmad,* no. 513 (1/71). Its isnâd is hasan.

It was narrated that 'Uthmân ﷺ said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَنْ تَعَمَّدَ عَلَيَّ كَذِبًا، فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ بَيْتًا فِي النَّارِ»

"The one who tells a lie about me deliberately, let him take his place in Hell."[1]

This is some of the *ahâdeeth* that were narrated by 'Uthmân from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This is indicative of 'Uthmân's knowledge and keenness to learn more of the Prophet's teachings and to understand Islam.

Forbearance

Forbearance is one of the pillars of wisdom. Allâh has ascribed the attribute of forbearance to Himself in several places in the Qur'ân, such as the verse in which He says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا۟ مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا ٱسْتَزَلَّهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا۟ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ﴾

"Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met (i.e. the battle of Uhud), it was Shaytân (Satan) who caused them to backslide (run away from the battlefield) because of some (sins) they had earned. But Allâh, indeed, has forgiven them. Surely, Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing" (*Aal 'Imrân* 3:155)

The Prophet ﷺ reached the pinnacle of forbearance and tolerance, and the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân followed the exemplary words and deeds of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. There are many cases which point to his forbearance and self control. One of the clearest examples of his forbearance is the story of his being besieged by the rebels, when he commanded the Muhâjireen and Ansâr who were with him to go to their own homes and leave him, even though they were able to protect him.

[1] *Musnad Ahmad,* no. 507 (1/70). Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

His forbearance was based on his longing to meet his Lord and his desire to protect Muslim blood from being shed, even if that led to his own death.[1]

Easygoing nature

It was narrated from 'Ata' ibn Farrookh, the freed slave of Quraysh, that 'Uthmân ﷺ bought some land from a man, then the man changed his mind and did not complete the deal. 'Uthmân met him and said: Why are you not taking the money? He said: You did not give me the right price and everyone whom I met criticized me. He said: Is that why you don't want to go ahead with it? He said: Yes. He said: Choose between the land and the money. Then he said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«أَدْخَلَ اللهُ الجَنَّةَ رَجُلًا كَانَ سَهْلًا مُشْتَرِيًا وَبَائِعًا ، وَقَاضِيًا وَمُقْتَضِيًا»

"Allâh admitted to Paradise a man who was easygoing in buying and selling, both when paying off his debts and when asking people to pay him what they owed him."[2]

This is a sublime example of being easygoing in buying and selling, which indicates that 'Uthmân ﷺ was of a noble nature and was not deeply attached to this world; he scorned worldly gain in the interests of good manners, the most important of which was selflessness, for being selfish could have made him give his own interests precedence even if that harmed others.[3]

Gentleness

Allâh reminded His Messenger ﷺ that He had bestowed upon him the quality of gentleness as a sign of His mercy towards him and towards His slaves. Allâh says:

---

[1] *Al-Kafâ'ah al-Idâriyyah fi'l-Siyâsah al-Shar'iyyah* by Dr. 'Abd-Allâh al-Qâdiri, p. 65

[2] *Musnad Ahmad,* no. 410 (1/58). It is *hasan li ghayrihi.*

[3] *At-Tareekh al-Islami,* 17, 18/126

﴿فَبِمَا رَحۡمَةٖ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمۡۖ وَلَوۡ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلۡقَلۡبِ لَٱنفَضُّواْ مِنۡ حَوۡلِكَۖ﴾

"And by the Mercy of Allâh, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you" (*Aal 'Imrân* 3:159)

The verse indicates that the attribute of gentleness is a mercy from Allâh which He bestows upon whomsoever He will of His slaves, and the Messenger ﷺ was blessed with this quality as a mercy from Allâh towards Him and towards His slaves to whom He had sent him. It may be understood from this verse that the one who has the quality of gentleness is loved by people and they gather around him and accept his commands and prohibitions.[1] Gentleness is one of the good characteristics that 'Uthmân ﷺ had. He was gentle towards his people and compassionate towards his ummah, lest anyone be stricken with calamity without his knowledge, which would make him unable to help him. He used to check on people, helping the weak and taking what was due from the strong.

Forgiveness

It was narrated from 'Imrân ibn 'Abd-Allâh ibn Talhah that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ went out to pray Fajr and he entered through the door through which he usually entered, and another man pushed and shoved at the door. He said: See who it is. They looked and found that it was a man who had a dagger or sword with him. 'Uthmân ﷺ said to him: What is this? He said: I wanted to kill you. He said: Subhân Allâh, woe to you! Why do you want to kill me? He said: Your governor wronged me in Yemen. He said: Why didn't you complain to me about your mistreatment? Then if I did not help you or settle the score for you, you could decide to kill me. He said to those who were around him: What do

[1] *Al-Kafâ'ah al-Idariyyah*, p. 69

you think? They said: O Ameer al-Mu'mineen, he is an enemy over whom Allâh has given you power. He said: He is a person who thought of a sin but Allâh protected me from him. Bring me someone who will guarantee that you will not enter Madînah again so long as I am the ruler of the Muslims. So he brought a man of his own people who gave that guarantee, and he let him go.[1]

This is a great example of tolerance on the part of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, as he forgave a man who wanted to kill him. Forgiveness when one is able to take revenge is one of the qualities of perfection in a man, and it indicates that he has risen above his ego, has rid himself of selfishness and has few ties with this world, being strongly tied to the Hereafter instead. In addition to it being a righteous deed, this characteristic also raises a person in status in the Hereafter, and is a wise approach in this world, because if this man who had wanted to attack him was killed or punished, that may have caused turmoil, stirring up hatred in the hearts of his fellow-tribesmen, and they may have decided to take revenge whenever the opportunity arose. But forgiving him would lead to his fellow-tribesmen rebuking him for what he had tried to do, thus the turmoil was nipped in the bud. The one who is forbearing is able to win people's hearts.[2]

Humility

Allâh says:

﴿وَعِبَادُ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ ٱلْجَـٰهِلُونَ قَالُوا۟ سَلَـٰمًا﴾

"And the (faithful) slaves of the Most Gracious (Allâh) are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the

[1] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 17, 18/22, quoting from *Tareekh al-Madînah al-Munawwarah,* p. 1027, 1028

[2] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 17, 18/22

foolish address them (with bad words) they reply back with mild words of gentleness" (*Al-Furqân* 25:63)

The Lord has made humility one of the main characteristics of His believing slaves. The Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân also had this characteristic, which stemmed from his sincerity towards Allâh ﷻ. It was narrated that 'Abd-Allâh al-Roomi said: 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân used to get his wudoo' water for himself when he got up to pray at night. It was said to him: Why don't you tell your servant to do it for you? He said: No; the night is for them to rest.[1] This is an example of the mercy that was characteristic of the caliph 'Uthmân. Even though he was older and of a high social status, he would help himself at night and not wake up the servants, even though Allâh has placed the servants at the service of their masters. The Muslim to whom Allâh has given servants should remember that the servant is a human being like him: he has limited energy and he has feelings, so he should respect his feelings and let him rest fully when he sleeps, so that his work will not be too difficult for him.[2] A sign of his humility and respect for the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ was that if he passed by him when riding, he would dismount until al-'Abbâs disappeared, out of respect for him.[3]

Modesty and chastity

Modesty was one of the most famous characteristics of 'Uthmân ؓ, and one of the best, with which Allâh adorned him. It was a source of goodness and blessing, kindness and compassion. 'Uthmân ؓ was one of the most modest of men.[4] Al-Hasan al-Basri (ؒ) mentioned 'Uthmân and his intense modesty, saying: He would be in a house with the door closed, and he would not take off his garment in order to pour water on himself, and

[1] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah,* no. 742. Its isnâd is *saheeh.*

[2] *At-Tareekh al-Islami,* 17, 18/62

[3] *At-Tabyeen fi Ansâb al-Qurashiyyeen,* 152

[4] *'Uthmân ibn Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 48, 49.

modesty would prevent him from standing up straight.[1]

Another example of his modesty was narrated by Banânah, who was his wife's slave woman. She said: When 'Uthmân bathed, I would bring him his garment and he would say: Do not look at me, for that is not permissible for you.[2]

And there are ahâdeeth of the Prophet ﷺ which speak of his modesty. We will quote them below as is appropriate.

With regard to his chastity and avoidance of bad behaviour, there is an abundance of reports that point to that. He did not commit immoral deeds either during the *Jâhiliyyah* or in Islam. 'Uthmân said: I was never involved in singing or telling lies, and I never touched my penis with my right hand since I swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. I never drank alcohol during the *Jâhiliyyah* or in Islam, and I never committed zina during the *Jâhiliyyah* or in Islam.[3]

Generosity

'Uthmân was one of the most generous of this ummah. There are many reports which speak of this, and form a bright page in the history of Islam. We have already seen what he did for the campaign to Tabook, and how he bought the well of Bi'r Roomah and gave it in charity to the Muslims, and how he expanded the Prophet's Mosque at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, and how he gave a caravan of food in charity at the time of Abu Bakr ﷺ. From the time he became Muslim, he freed one slave every week for the sake of Allâh. In all, he freed approximately 2,400 slaves.[4] It was narrated that Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh - who was one of the most generous of people - owed him fifty thousand, and Talhah said to him one day: Your money is ready; come and take it. 'Uthmân said to him: Keep it as a reward for your chivalry.[5] 'Uthmân's

[1] *Saheeh at-Tawtheeq fi Seerah wa Hayât Dhi'n-Noorayn*, p. 43
[2] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 3/59.
[3] *Saheeh al-Tawtheeq*, p. 44
[4] *as-Sawâ'iq al-Muhriqah* by Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, 1/237
[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/227

generosity was a basic feature of his personality. He used his wealth in the service of Allâh's religion and he was not stingy in helping to establish the Islamic state, in jihad for the sake of Allâh and in serving the society, seeking thereby the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ.

Courage

'Uthmân is regarded as one of the most courageous of men, and the evidence for that is as follows:

1- He went out to engage in jihad for the sake of Allâh, and was present on all the campaigns with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Although some may criticize him for not being present at Badr, we have already explained that this was in response to the command of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ counted him among those who had been present and gave him a share of the booty, and he will attain the reward for that too, in sha Allâh. After coming to know what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said about it, there is nothing more that can be said.

2- The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent him as an envoy to Quraysh at the time of al-Hudaybiyah.

   As we have seen above, 'Uthmân obeyed the request of the Messenger ﷺ and went to Quraysh knowing the risk that he was taking, but his courage and heroism compelled him to obey.

   The one who agrees to go as an envoy under such circumstances is courageous indeed, and he is a rare type of hero. It is true that this was a command from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, but at the same time it is a courageous act that could not be undertaken by any coward or ordinary man.[1]

[1] *al-Ameen Dhu'n-Noorayn*, p. 194-196

3- His self-sacrifice. When 'Uthmân was besieged in his house, the outlaws asked him to abdicate from the caliphate and gave him no other choice: abdicate or be killed, and dismiss some of his governors and hand some of them over. He persisted in his attitude of self-sacrifice so as to prevent the caliphate from falling into the hands of this gang who would remove whomever they wanted and appoint whomever they wanted or wrest the caliphate from the one who had been appointed by the ummah, lest that set a precedent.[1] He insisted on that even though he could see death in the swords of the besiegers. The one who takes such a stance must be brave, and he is in the right. No coward or lover of this world would ever take such a stance. For such cowards life is better than any status or position, and better than the whole world.[2] But 'Uthmân's unwavering insistence, determined resolve and great courage stemmed from his strong faith in Allâh and belief in the Last Day, which were deeply rooted in his heart and made him scorn everything in this life, even life itself.[3]

4- Jihad with his wealth. Jihad with oneself is mentioned alongside jihad with one's wealth, and may take precedence over it. Allâh says:

﴿لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُو۟لِى ٱلضَّرَرِ وَٱلْمُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۚ وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَفَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allâh with their wealth

[1] op. cit., p. 197

[2] op. cit., p. 197

[3] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Muhammad al-Wakeel, p. 304

and their lives. Allâh has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit (at home). Unto each, Allâh has promised good (Paradise), but Allâh has preferred those who strive hard and fight, above those who sit (at home) by a huge reward" (*An-Nisa'* 4:95)

There are many verses which mention wealth alongside oneself (in the context of jihad). The one who spends his wealth generously for the sake of Allâh is also a mujâhid and is courageous. 'Uthmân ﷺ spent a great deal for the sake of Allâh, so much so that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَا ضَرَّ عُثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ الْيَوْمِ»

"Nothing will harm 'Uthmân, no matter what he does, after today,"[1] twice.

'Uthmân was brave and did not fear death; he was courageous in confronting and challenging falsehood and he was forbearing and did not let the folly of the foolish cause him to say ignorant things.[2]

Resolve

Resolve was a fundamental part of the character of 'Uthmân. When Abu Bakr ﷺ presented Islam to him, he said to him: Woe to you, O 'Uthmân, for you are a man of resolve and you should be able to distinguish truth from falsehood. What are these idols that our people worship?[3]

In 26AH, 'Uthmân expanded al-Masjid al-Harâm. He bought (property) from some of the people, but others refused to sell. He still demolished the houses, and he put the price for them in the bayt al-mâl, and they started to shout at 'Uthmân, so he ordered that they be detained. He said: Do you know what made you dare

[1] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, no. 3701

[2] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 304

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Sâdiq Arjoon, p. 47

to shout at me? Nothing made you dare to shout at me but my forbearance. 'Umar did that to you before, and you did not shout at him. Then 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khâlid ibn Usayd spoke to him concerning them, and he let them go.[1]

Another indication of his resolve came when he protected the system of caliphate from being undermined. He did not respond to the rebels' demand to step down as caliph, and through his steadfastness the system continued, because if he had given in to their demands to step down, the position of caliph would have become like a toy in the hands of those who were tempted by the shaytân and were trying to spread corruption on earth; chaos would have prevailed and the system of government would have been undermined, and the thugs and troublemakers would have gained power over the rulers and governors. 'Uthmân's view was farsighted; if he had given in to them, he would have set a precedent and every time the people objected to their ruler, they would depose him, which would cause a great deal of trouble to the ummah, and distract them from fighting their enemy by embroiling them in a civil war, which would lead to chaos and collapse. But he could not find anything but his own self to sacrifice for the sake of the ummah and protect it from collapse. By means of this sacrifice he supported the social system and protected the authority that ruled it, lest the troublemakers harm it. There can be no doubt that this action of 'Uthmân's was the greatest that any man to whom the reins of the ummah were given could do, as he resorted to the lesser of the two evils by means of this sacrifice, to protect the system and authority of the caliphate.[2] We will discuss this further in the appropriate place, in sha Allâh.

Patience

'Uthmân bore the characteristic of patience, as is indicated by his steadfastness at the time of fitnah. His attitude in facing the

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/250

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah min al-Fitnah,* 1/474

events that befell him and the Muslims was the highest example of self-sacrifice that any person could offer for the sake of preserving the community and the honour of the ummah, and preventing Muslim blood from being shed. He could have protected himself if all he cared about was saving his own life without caring about the ummah. If he had been selfish he would have urged the Sahâbah and the sons of the Muhâjireen and Ansâr who came to his defence to go and fight the outlaws who had rebelled against his rule. But he wanted to keep the ummah united, so he offered himself as a sacrifice. 'Uthmân ﷺ announced that he would face the overwhelming fitnah with patience[1] , in obedience to the words of Allâh:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّ ٱلنَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا۟ لَكُمْ فَٱخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَـٰنًا وَقَالُوا۟ حَسْبُنَا ٱللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ ٱلْوَكِيلُ﴾

"Those (i.e. believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, 'Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them.' But it (only) increased them in Faith, and they said: 'Allâh (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)'" (*Aal 'Imrân* 3:173)

'Uthmân had strong faith in Allâh and was noble-hearted, with deep insight and patience, so he sacrificed himself to save the ummah. That is one of the greatest of his virtues in the eyes of the Muslims.[2] Ibn Taymiyah (ﷺ) said: It is well-known via tawâtur that 'Uthmân was a person who refrained the most from bloodshed, and he was the most patient of people with those who would tarnish his honour and who planned to shed his blood and kill him. They besieged him with the aim of killing him, and he knew that they wanted to kill him; the Muslims came to support him and advised him to fight, but he kept urging the people to refrain from fighting. He told those who would listen to

[1] *Siyar ash-Shuhada'* by al-Sakhistiyâni, p. 57, 58

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah min al-Fitnah,* 1/472

him not to fight. It was said to him: Go to Makkah, but he said: I will not be one who causes the sanctuary to be violated. It was said to him: Go to Syria, but he said: I will not leave the land to which I migrated. It was said to him: Then fight them. He said: I will not be the first of the successors of Muhammad to confront his ummah by the sword. The patience that 'Uthmân showed until he was killed was one of the greatest of his virtues in the eyes of the Muslims.[1]

Justice

'Uthmân had the quality of justice. It was narrated from 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Adiyy ibn al-Khiyâr that he entered upon 'Uthmân when he was being besieged and said to him: You are the leader of the people, and there has befallen you what you see, which is that a man who led us in prayer is the leader of this turmoil - meaning 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Udays al-Balwa - but I shall refuse to pray behind him. 'Uthmân said to him: Prayer is the best thing that the people can do. If the people do something good then join them in that, and if they do something bad then avoid their bad deeds.[2]

Ibn Shabbah narrated with his isnâd that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân entered upon a slave of his who was feeding his she-camel, and he saw something in the feed that he disliked, so he took hold of the slave's ear and tweaked it. Then he regretted it and said to his slave: Settle the score. The slave refused, but he did not leave him alone until he had taken hold of his ear and begun to tweak it. 'Uthmân said to him: Pull hard, until he thought that (the slave) had pulled as hard as he had done. Then 'Uthmân said: How easy it is to settle a score before it is settled in the Hereafter.[3]

Worship

'Uthmân was one of those who strove hard in worship. It is

[1] *Manhâj as-Sunnah*, 3/202, 203

[2] *al-Bukhâri, no. 695*

[3] *Akhbâr al-Madînah* by Ibn Shabbah, 3/236

narrated via more than one isnâd that he would recite the entire Qur'ân in one rak'ah at the Black Stone during the days of Hajj, and this was something that he did regularly.[1] Hence it was narrated that Ibn 'Umar said concerning the verse

﴿أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَٰنِتٌ ءَانَآءَ ٱلَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَآئِمًا يَحْذَرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوا۟ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِۦ﴾

"Is one who is obedient to Allâh, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)?" (*Az-Zumar* 39:9)

Such was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân.[2] And Ibn 'Abbâs said concerning the verse

﴿هَلْ يَسْتَوِى هُوَ وَمَن يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۙ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

"Is such a man equal to one (believer in the Islamic Monotheism) who commands justice, and is himself on the Straight Path?" (*An-Nahl* 16:76):

Such a man was 'Uthmân.[3] He would start reading Qur'ân the night before Friday and complete it the night before Thursday.[4] He used to fast all the time, and spend the night in prayer, apart from a short sleep at the beginning of the night.[5]

Fear of Allâh, weeping and taking stock of himself

In one of his khutbahs he said: O people, fear Allâh, for fear of Allâh is a treasure. The smartest of the people is the one who

[1] *al-Tabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/76; *Tareekh al-Islam, 'Ahd al-Khulafa'*, by al-Dhahabi, p. 476

[2] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 4/47.

[3] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, 2/579

[4] *'Uluw al-Himmah*, 3/93

[5] *Sifat as-Safwah* by Imam Ibn al-Jawzi, 1/302

checks on himself and strives for that which comes after death, strives to acquire some of the light of Allâh for his grave, and fears lest Allâh raise him blind when he had sight (in this world).[1] And it was narrated that he said: If I were between Paradise and Hell, not knowing to which of them I would be commanded to be taken, I would wish to be turned to ashes before I knew in which of them I would end up.

He would tremble and tears would roll down his cheeks whenever he thought of the Hereafter, and when he imagined himself when his grave was opened and his body was taken out to stand before Allâh and be brought to account.[2] It was narrated that Hâni, the freed slave of 'Uthmân, said: When 'Uthmân stood by a grave he would weep until his beard became wet. It was said to him: You remember Paradise and Hell and weep because of them? He said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ الْقَبْرَ أَوَّلُ مَنَازِلِ الآخِرَةِ. فَإِنْ نَجَا مِنْهُ، فَمَا بَعْدَهُ أَيْسَرُ مِنْهُ. وَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْجُ مِنْهُ، فَمَا بَعْدَهُ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ»

"The grave is the first stage of the Hereafter; if a person safe at that stage, what comes after it will be easier than it, but if he is not safe at that stage, what comes after it will be harder than it."

He said: And the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَا رَأَيْتُ مَنْظَرًا قَطُّ إِلَّا وَالْقَبْرُ أَفْظَعُ مِنْهُ»

"By Allâh, I have never seen any scene but the grave is more terrifying than it."

He said: When the Prophet ﷺ had finished burying the deceased, he would stand over him and say:

---

[1] *Saheeh at-Tawtheeq fi Seerah wa Hayât Dhu'n-Noorayn* by Majdi Fathi al-Sayyid, p. 107

[2] *Nizâm al-Hukm fi 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Hamad Muhammad al-Samad, p. 205

«اسْتَغْفِرُوا لِأَخِيكُمْ وَاسْأَلُوا لَهُ بِالتَّثْبِيتِ فَإِنَّهُ الآنَ يُسْأَلُ»

"Pray for forgiveness for your brother and ask that he may be made steadfast, for even now is he being questioned."[1]

This is true understanding of what it means to meet Allâh, which is what 'Uthmân ﷺ understood and is what he lived by. How great is our need for this understanding by means of which souls are revived and potentials unleashed.

Asceticism

'Uthmân ﷺ is well known for being a wealthy man, but despite that there are reports which indicate that he was also one of the ascetics who shun worldly comforts. It was narrated from Humayd ibn Nu'aym that 'Umar and 'Uthmân (ﷺ) were invited to a meal, and when they set out, 'Uthmân said to 'Umar: We have come to a meal where I wish we did not come. He said: Why? He said: I am afraid it was prepared in order to show off.[2] This is how 'Uthmân ﷺ understood the definition of generosity that is approved of in Islam; generosity does not mean trying to show off or compete by offering many kinds of food in large quantities, rather it means spending money without being extravagant or showing off, whilst giving thanks to the Bestower of blessings (Allâh ﷻ) and being humble towards other people. This understanding is indicative of 'Uthmân's asceticism and disinterest in worldly status.[3] Another example of 'Uthmân's asceticism and humility is the report narrated by Imam Ahmad from Maymoon ibn Mihrân, who said: al-Hamadâni told me that he saw 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân riding a mule with his slave Nâ'il behind him, when he was the caliph.[4] He also narrated that al-

[1] *Fadâ'il as-Sahâbah*, no. 773. Its *isnâd* is *hasan*, *Abu Dawood* (3221).

[2] *Az-Zuhd* by Imam Ahmad, p. 126

[3] *at-Tareekh al-Islami*, 48/17, 18

[4] *az-Zuhd*, p. 127

Hamadâni said: I saw 'Uthmân sleeping in the mosque, wrapped in a blanket with no one around him, when he was the caliph.[1] And he narrated from Sharahbeel ibn Muslim that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ used to offer the people fine food, then he would go into his own house and eat vinegar and olive oil.[2]

These are a few examples of the asceticism of the caliph 'Uthmân. When the *zâhid* is an ordinary man, then his zuhd is not something that attracts attention or evokes admiration, but when he is a rich man, then his *zuhd* is something astonishing for those who think about it, and it is a lesson for those with the eyes to see, because abundant wealth tempts a person to be focused on physical pleasure and living a life of extravagance, so for a rich person to be a zâhid, he must truly understand what it means to prepare to meet Allâh, to such a point that this idea dominates his thinking and the Hereafter looms large in his mind whilst this world pales into insignificance. This is how 'Uthmân ﷺ was; he was one of the wealthiest men in Islam, but the strength of his faith overcame his whims and desires, so he was one of the greatest of ascetics, and he gave an example to all rich people of how it is possible to combine wealth and asceticism in this world.[3]

Gratitude

'Uthmân was deeply grateful to Allâh ﷻ and expressed that gratitude in his words, thoughts and actions. One day he was called to catch some people who were engaged in some suspicious activity, so he went to catch them red-handed, but they dispersed before he reached them. He freed a slave in gratitude to Allâh that no Muslim had been shamed at his hands.[4]

[1] ibid.

[2] *at-Tareekh al-Islami*, 48/17, 18

[3] op.cit., 49/17, 18

[4] *'Uluw al-Himmah*, 5/481

Checking on people

'Uthmân was a kind and caring man, and he would ask after the Muslims, find out about their problems, check on those who were absent, welcome those who returned from trips and ask after those who were sick. Imam Ahmad narrated that Moosa ibn Talhah said: I saw 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân when he was on the minbar, finding out about the people, asking about their affairs and the current prices of goods.[1] Ibn Sa'd narrated in *al-Tabaqât* that he said: I saw 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân going out one Friday wearing two yellow garments. He sat on the minbar and the muezzin gave the call to prayer whilst he was speaking to the people and asking them about their travels, who had come back and who was sick.[2] He ﷺ was concerned about the affairs of his people, helping those who were in need and allocating a stipend from the *bayt al-mâl* to those who were in need.[3] And it was narrated that 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr said: I lived at the time of 'Uthmân and there was no Muslim soul who did not have a right to the wealth of Allâh, i.e., the *bayt al-mâl*.[4]

Defining the specialities of workers

What is meant by defining the specialities of workers is dividing the work among his workers in such a way that each employee knows what type of work he is commissioned to do and thus is able to do it without falling short, and he does not get involved in work that has been delegated to someone else. Dividing tasks in accordance with the laws of the universe is the practice of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs who came after him. At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ, jobs and tasks were allocated among the Muslims in such a way that each person was given work in his own field as will be discussed

[1] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah*, no. 812; its *isnâd* is *saheeh*

[2] *al-Tabaqât*, 3/59

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah*, 1/396

[4] *al-Musannaf fi'l-Hadeeth* by Ibn Shaybah, 3/1023

below, in sha Allâh. In the fields of the judiciary, financial affairs, the army and governorship of the regions, 'Uthmân's leadership qualities can be seen in the way he selected people who were qualified in those various fields. Work was divided and guidelines were set out, which were among the most important elements of success in the state of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.[1]

Benefitting from qualified people

Respecting people for their qualifications and directing the ummah to respect them, honour them and appoint them to the right position and not undermine them, and to benefit from their energies and specialties - all of this made the early generation of this ummah attain a position of pride, glory and power on this earth.[2] This quality was manifested in the character of 'Uthmân ﷺ when he put to good use the qualifications of Zayd ibn Thâbit and the committee which helped him to collect the Qur'ân in one recitation.

These are some of the notable qualities of the character of 'Uthmân ﷺ, which serve as an example for the Muslim leaders and common folk, and for anyone who wants to follow the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in this life.

Learning about the attributes of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and trying to follow their example is a step in the right direction for devoted leaders who are able to lead the ummah steadily towards its goals. One of the means of supporting this religion is finding leaders who are devoted to Allâh and whose hearts are filled with faith which is reflected in their actions and deeds, and with *taqwa* that is manifested in all situations. This pious, wise leadership is the one that seeks to rule in accordance with the laws of Allâh and to unleash and direct the potentials of the ummah; it is the one that follows Islam and adheres to it inwardly and outwardly, beliefs and laws, in both religious and worldly

[1] *al-Kafâ'ah al-Idâriyyah*, p. 117

[2] op. cit., p. 157

matters. It is the one that is thinking day and night of its 'aqeedah and ummah, and striving hard by all means to solve the problems that it is facing, striving sincerely to remove all obstacles that prevent it from attaining success and power.





Chapter 3

Financial and Judiciary Institutions at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ

Financial institutions

When 'Uthmân became caliph, he did not change the financial strategy that had been adopted by 'Umar, even though he allowed the Muslims to acquire and accumulate wealth, build palaces and own large amounts of land. The Muslims were no longer subject to the strictness of 'Umar which had scared them and made them afraid, and which had prevented them from doing a lot of what they had desired. So the time of 'Uthmân was a time of ease for the Muslims.[1]

Financial policy announced by 'Uthmân when he became caliph

'Uthmân ﷺ sent a letter to the governors and another to the *kharâj* collectors, and he addressed another letter to the masses. I

[1] *Mabâdi' al-Iqtisâd al-Islâmi* by Su'âd Ibrâheem Sâlih, p. 217

have quoted the texts of these letters when I spoke of his method of ruling. In the light of these texts we may say that the public finance policy announced by the first three Rightly-Guided Caliphs was based on the following principles:

- √ Applying the general financial policy of Islam
- √ Creating a balance between collection of dues and the welfare of the people
- √ Taking from the Muslims what they owed to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims
- √ Giving the Muslims what they are entitled to from the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims
- √ Taking what the *ahl al-dhimmah* owe to the bayt al-mâl of the Muslims in a proper manner, and giving them what they are entitled to, and not wronging them
- √ Selecting *kharâj* collectors for their honesty and sincerity
- √ Avoiding financial corruption, which would lead to prosperity for the entire ummah

'Uthmân's intention in applying his financial policy

There can be no doubt that the third caliph - 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ - was determined to apply the financial policies of Islam. Allegiance was given to him on the basis that he would apply the laws of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, and adopt the policies of his two predecessors. Abu Bakr ﷺ had applied that which was revealed in the Qur'ân and established as Sunnah by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ with regard to financial policies and other rulings. 'Umar developed the financial institutions, laying down foundations, establishing guidelines and principles, increasing the sources of income and setting out guidelines on expenditure. 'Uthmân followed in their footsteps, and also engaged in *ijtihâd* with regard to some matters that are subject

to *ijtihâd*. He implemented the ruling of Allâh on earth with regard to financial and other matters. He supervised the way zakâh was collected for the *bayt al-mâl* and how it was distributed to those who were entitled to it; how the *ahl al-kitâb* paid the jizyah to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Islamic state, thus coming under its protection, and how security was provided to them and how they made use of other public services; how the *mujâhideen* acquired booty and sent one-fifth of it (the *khums*) to the *bayt al-mâl*, which distributed it to orphans, the poor, wayfarers and others in accordance with the words of Allâh

﴿وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّمَا غَنِمۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُۥ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ
وَٱلۡيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبۡنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمۡ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَىٰ
عَبۡدِنَا يَوۡمَ ٱلۡفُرۡقَانِ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡتَقَى ٱلۡجَمۡعَانِۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٌ﴾

"And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth (1/5th) of it is assigned to Allâh, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)], (and also) the orphans, Al-Masâkeen (the poor) and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allâh and in that which We sent down to Our slave (Muhammad ﷺ) on the Day of Criterion (between right and wrong), the Day when the two forces met (the battle of Badr); and Allâh is Able to do all things" (*Al-Anfâl* 8:41); and other known sources of income for the state.

The financial policy at the time of 'Uthmân and the other Rightly-Guided Caliphs was distinguished by the fact that it was connected to Islam, the implementation of Islamic teachings and protection of sources of income. Public expenditure was aimed at supporting the message of Islam and the good of the Muslims. This was a policy of wise spending, because the teachings of Islam forbid extravagance and fight against it, for Allâh does not love the extravagant. Islam also forbids the foolish from having control of the public wealth. The public income should all be good and from halâl sources and some of this income is to be spent on those

who need it most among the people.

Creating a balance between collection of dues and the welfare of the people

In his letter, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ pointed out to the governors that collecting wealth for the *bayt al-mâl* was almost taking precedence over the primary duty of the governors, which was ensuring the welfare of the people, and that was because the collection of wealth was one of the duties of the people that was undertaken by the head of the Islamic state, so it was not right for it to be done at the expense of other duties.[1] From the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ and the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the *fuqaha'* derived rulings on what is meant by the duty of ensuring the welfare of the people, i.e., the duties of the caliph towards the people, which are as follows:

al-Mâwardi said: His duties towards the public include ten things:

1- Preserving the religion on the basis of its fundamental principles and the consensus of the early generations (salaf) of this ummah

2- Judging between disputants and ending disputes so that justice will prevail, no transgressor will get away with wronging others and no one who has been wronged will remain unrequited.

3- Guarding the welfare of the ummah and protecting women, so that the people will be able to go about their daily lives and travel about in safety.

4- Carrying out hadd punishments to protect the sacred limits of Allâh from being violated and to protect people's rights from being destroyed or taken away.

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân* (ﷺ), p. 62

5- Strengthening the border posts with sufficient arms and strength to ward off attack, so that the enemy will not be able to seize any opportunity to transgress the border or shed the blood of any Muslim or *mu'âhid* (non-Muslim living under Muslim rule).

6- Jihad against those who oppose Islam, after calling them to Islam until they either become Muslim or enter into a treaty with the Muslims *(dhimmah)*, so that the promise of Allâh will be fulfilled to make Islam prevail over all other religions.

7- Collecting *fay'* and zakâh in the manner enjoined in the texts or in accordance with *ijtihâd* without going to extremes.

8- Working out stipends and what people are entitled to from *bayt al-mâl*, without extravagance or stinginess, and paying them on time, neither too early nor too late.

9- Appointing honest and sincere people to various posts and tasks including financial matters, so that this work will be controlled and run by people who are qualified and sincere.

10- Direct supervision of affairs, checking on things at various levels, so that he will be directly involved in running the affairs of the ummah and protecting the ummah. He should not rely on delegation because of being preoccupied with physical pleasures or worship.[1]

In brief, the duties of the caliph are based on two conditions of the oath of allegiance *(bay'ah)*, namely protecting the faith and

[1] *al-Ahkâm as-Sultâniyyah wa'l-Wilâyât ad-Deeniyyah* by Abu'l-Hasan al-Mâwardi, p. 16, 17

running the worldly affairs (of the ummah)[1], which formed the mission of the Messenger ﷺ, whose successor he is. Al-Mâwardi and al-Farra' were contemporaries of one another who came up with a precise list of the duties of the ruler. But that was their own *ijtihâd* based on the needs of the ummah at that time, and the rights of the ummah should not be limited to what was listed by one or two scholars, or more, no matter how vast their knowledge and no matter how comprehensive their analysis. This would apply even if the scholar was our own contemporary, so how about if their opinions and ijtihâd came centuries before our time?[2] Hence the duties of the ruler should be defined on the basis of these two conditions so that his position vis a vis the ummah will be valid. They are: protecting the faith and running worldly affairs. Committees of scholars should be formed to define that for the people of their own time.[3]

These are some of the duties of the caliph with regard to taking care of the people, as defined by the *fuqaha'*, but they are subject to further development in such a way as to suit developments at different times, provided that it does not go against any Qur'ânic text or religious ruling.[4]

Taking what is due from the Muslims

The kharâj collectors are deputies of the state who collect the dues of the bayt al-mâl. If they take what the Muslims are obliged to give, then they have fulfilled their duties, but if they go to extremes in collecting the dues of the *bayt al-mâl*, then they have wronged their sponsors and caused them a great deal of harm, and forced them to do more than they are able. The Messenger ﷺ warned against going to extremes in collecting the dues of the *bayt al-mâl*, and he forbade collecting the best of people's wealth in

[1] *Muqaddimat Ibn Khuldoon*, p. 191

[2] *al-Khilâfah bayna at-Tanzeer wa't-Tatbeeq* by Muhammad al-Mârdâwi, p. 66

[3] op. cit., p. 67

[4] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 62

zakâh, and he enjoined a moderate approach in collecting the zakâh on crops.[1]

Giving the Muslims what they are entitled to from the bayt al-mâl

The stipends for the Muslims from the *bayt al-mâl* were given either directly, as in the case of distribution of zakâh to those who were entitled to it, or the giving of extra wealth to the Muslims in accordance with the stipend system, or they were given indirectly, in the form of public services offered by the state to the people and paid for from the *bayt al-mâl*. In both cases, stipends were to be given on a just and fair basis. In the case of stipends that are given directly, it is not permissible to go against the general guidelines so as to favour some and deprive others, or decrease the share of some without any justification. It is not permissible to delay giving the stipend after the appointed time because of complex procedures or barriers which prevent those who have been wronged from reaching those who are in authority to discuss the wrongs that have been done, such as delays in payment, being given too little or receiving nothing at all. With regard to indirect payment in the form of public services offered by the state to the people, it is not permissible for the benefit to go to one individual only; rather it should benefit the whole ummah.[2]

Not wronging *ahl al-dhimmah*; taking what is due from them for the *bayt al-mâl* in a proper manner, and giving them their rights in a proper manner

It is not permissible to wrong the people of the Book when taking jizyah from them, because the people of the Book are *dhimmis* who are living in the Islamic state and are under its care and protection so long as they pay the *jizyah*, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ enjoined treating them with kindness. He appointed

[1] op. cit., p. 64

[2] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 66

'Abd-Allâh ibn Arqam in charge of collecting the *jizyah* of *ahl al-dhimmah*, then when he turned to leave he called him and said: "The one who wrongs a *mu'âhid*, or imposes a greater burden on him than he can bear, or detracts from his rights, or takes anything from him without his consent, I will be his opponent on the Day of Resurrection."[1] Based on that, 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ left instructions when he died: I urge the caliph who comes after me to treat *ahl al-dhimmah* well and to fulfil the covenant with them, to protect them from their enemies and not to burden them with more than they can bear.[2]

If the jizyah collectors harm the *dhimmis* or burden them with more than they can bear, or punish them, or take the jizyah from an elderly man who has nothing and is unable to work, or they take it from a *dhimmi* who has become Muslim, this is a kind of injustice to which the third caliph drew attention in his letter to the *kharâj* collectors, basing that on the teachings of the Messenger ﷺ.[3]

In addition to the jizyah, those of *ahl al-dhimmah* who were cultivating the *kharâj* lands - which were lands that had come into the possession of the Muslim state as the result of conquests - were to pay the *kharâj* that was due on those lands to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims. The *kharâj* collectors should pay attention to working out the amount that is due on the land that is cultivated by *ahl al-dhimmah*, which is to be done by taking into account all the factors that play a role in defining the amount that they have to pay, because neglecting all or some of these factors may lead to mistreatment of the *ahl al-dhimmah* who are cultivating it. These factors are four:

- The quality of the land: if it is good the crop will be good and if it is bad the yield will be less.
- Cultivation of different types of grains and crops, some of

[1] *al-Muntakhab min as-Sunnah,* p. 261

[2] *al-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân,* p. 67

[3] op. cit., p. 67

which may be expensive and some may be cheap, so the kharâj should reflect that.

- Irrigation: because the rate paid on crops that are irrigated by artificial means should not be as high as the rate paid on crops that may be irrigated by rivers and rainfall.
- *Kharâj* should not mean taking everything that is there; enough should be left for the people of the land so that they can survive times of hardship and famine.[1]

However, if the Islamic state has drawn up a covenant or made a peace deal with the people of the Book, then the Islamic state and the *kharâj* collectors have to adhere to the conditions stipulated in that covenant or deal, including conditions that stipulate how much they should pay of jizyah or *kharâj*, because when the Muslims draw up a covenant or enter into a deal, they are bound to fulfil its terms.[2]

Not wronging orphans

Orphans have rights to public wealth, according to the texts of the Qur'ân. Orphans are among those who are entitled to a share of zakâh wealth if they are poor. Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلصَّدَقَٰتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱلْعَٰمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَٱلْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِى ٱلرِّقَابِ وَٱلْغَٰرِمِينَ وَفِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۖ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

"As-Sadaqât (here it means Zakâh) are only for the Fuqarâ' (poor), and Al-Masâkeen (the poor) and those employed to collect (the funds); and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allâh's Cause (i.e. for Mujâhidoon – those fighting in a holy battle), and for the wayfarer (a traveller

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân,* p. 67

[2] ibid.

who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allâh. And Allâh is All-Knower, All-Wise" (*At-Tawbah* 9:60)

Orphans are also entitled to a share of the one-fifth of the war-booty (the khums), in accordance with the words of Allâh:

﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمْ آمَنتُم بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ
عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

"And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth (1/5th) of it is assigned to Allâh, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)], (and also) the orphans, Al-Masâkeen (the poor) and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allâh and in that which We sent down to Our slave (Muhammad ﷺ) on the Day of Criterion (between right and wrong), the Day when the two forces met (the battle of Badr); and Allâh is Able to do all things" (*Al-Anfâl* 8:41)

And orphans are also entitled to a stipend from the *bayt al-mâl*, which may be allocated to all children, including orphans. If an orphan is independent of means, he is obliged to pay zakâh on his wealth if he has wealth, and the zakâh collectors are obliged to take zakâh in a fair and just manner, lest their wrongdoing cause unjust loss to the orphan's wealth or part of it.[1]

The *kharâj* collectors should be honest and trustworthy

Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَن
تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا﴾

"Verily, Allâh commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge

[1] op. cit., p. 68

between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allâh) gives you! Truly, Allâh is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer" (*An-Nisa'* 4:58)

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ﴾

"Those who are faithfully true to their Amanât (all the duties which Allâh has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts) and to their covenants" (*Al-Mu'minoon* 23:8)

The Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ required the kharâj collectors to be trustworthy and to have the qualities that are essential in all those who work with the public wealth. If they did not have this quality then they would transgress against the rights of the *bayt al-mâl* and they would be unfair to the zakâh-payers, and the connection between the *bayt al-mâl* and the zakâh-payers would be broken. The Holy Qur'ân and the ahâdeeth of the Prophet ﷺ point to the importance of honesty and encourage adherence to it. The caliph 'Uthmân also required the zakâh-collectors to be trustworthy. Trustworthiness was mentioned in general terms in the letter of the caliph, which included sincerity towards the *bayt al-mâl* by taking care to collect all its dues from the people, sincerity towards the zakâh-payers by not wronging them and going to extremes in dictating the financial dues required from them, and sincerity towards *ahl al-dhimmah* by treating them kindly and implementing the conditions of the peace deal with them such as *jizyah* and *kharâj*, without imposing more.[1]

Effect of accumulation of wealth on the ummah

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ did not want to leave the masses without warning them or making them aware of what might happen to them, so he warned them lest this world attract them to its pleasures and delights. He was worried lest the ummah go

[1] Op. cit., p. 68

down the path of innovation after three factors became available to them: accumulation of wealth and a life of ease; when the children of female prisoners reached puberty; and when the non-Arabs began to read Qur'ân.[1] 'Uthmân realized that a life of ease would lead some people to deviate from the right path, because the life of ease that results from accumulation of wealth could corrupt them because of what they spent on luxuries and immoralities.[2] Allâh says:

﴿وَإِذَآ أَرَدْنَآ أَن نُّهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا۟ فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَٰهَا تَدْمِيرًا﴾

"And when We decide to destroy a town (population), We (first) send a definite order (to obey Allâh and be righteous) to those among them [or We (first) increase in number those of its population] who lead a life of luxury. Then, they transgress therein, and thus the word (of torment) is justified against it (them). Then We destroy it with complete destruction" (*Al-Isra'* 17:16)

Comparison between the policies of 'Umar and 'Uthmân

The financial policy announced by 'Uthmân was almost the same as the public financial policy implemented by 'Umar when he became caliph. He announced - and put into practice - that the public wealth could only be dealt under by three conditions: that it be taken in a just manner and given in a just manner, and that it be prevented from being spent on unjust causes.[3] So the financial policies of 'Umar and 'Uthmân sprang from the same source, which was the basic principles of Islam.[4]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/245

[2] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 70

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb*, by Qutub Ibrâheem Muhammad, p. 23 ff

[4] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 76

'Uthmân's guidelines explaining the basic principles of zakâh to the people

'Uthmân ﷺ said: This is the month of your zakâh, so whoever owes a debt, let him pay it off so that you may pay zakâh on your wealth. Whoever does not have anything will not be asked for anything unless he brings it voluntarily. Whoever has already paid zakâh does not have to pay anything more until this time next year. Ibrâheem ibn Sa'd said: I think he meant the month of Ramadân.[1] Abu 'Ubayd said: In some reports it says that the month meant by 'Uthmân was Muharram.[2] By saying this, 'Uthmân ﷺ confirmed the following principles:

(i) That zakâh is to be paid annually because the condition for paying zakâh -except in the case of crops - is that one year has passed. That is clear from the words of 'Uthmân, that the one who has already paid the zakâh on his wealth does not have to pay zakâh again until the same month in the following year, so he will not pay zakâh more than once in a year.

(ii) If we accept the view of Abu 'Ubayd, that the month meant by 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was the month of Muharram, then the statement may be taken as referring to the Islamic financial year, which is based on the Hijri calendar. After one full Hijri year has passed for the wealth that they possess, the Muslims must pay what is due of zakâh at the beginning of the following Hijri year, which is the month of Muharram, if the conditions are met.

(iii) 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ called on people to calculate the amount of zakâh due, then he asked them to pay off any

[1] *al-Amwâl by* Abu 'Ubayd, p. 534

[2] op. cit., p. 535

debts they owed so that they could pay zakâh on the rest of their wealth.[1] Perhaps 'Uthmân wanted to encourage people to pay off their debts to be fair to the creditors and so as to make it easier to calculate the wealth that was subject to zakâh, and so as to be certain that the debts were genuine.[2]

(iv) 'Uthmân ﷺ said: The one who does not have anything will not be asked to give anything unless he brings it voluntarily. Thus 'Uthmân opened the door to voluntary giving. Some Muslims may think that they do not have to give zakâh but they still want to give some of their wealth voluntarily to the bayt al-mâl, so that would be accepted from them and added to the zakâh income, and the state would spend it in the same way as zakâh.[3] The words of 'Uthmân ﷺ - The one who does not have anything will not be asked to give anything unless he brings it voluntarily - probably meant that the *bayt al-mâl* would not collect the zakâh on *gold* and silver unless the owner brought it to the *bayt al-mâl*. As for the zakâh that the people were forced to give and for which they would be fought if they withheld it, that is zakâh on livestock, crops and palm trees. Thus 'Uthmân would have left those who owned gold and silver to pay zakâh on wealth that is an invisible kind of wealth, namely gold, silver and trade goods, and he would not accept it from them unless they brought it voluntarily.[4] Concerning that, Abu 'Ubayd said: Do you not see that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to send the zakâh collectors to collect zakâh from the owners of livestock by force or by consent, and the rulers after him did likewise. It was for withholding the zakâh on

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân (R)*, p. 76

[2] op. cit.

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 77

[4] *al-Amwâl* by Abu 'Ubayd, p. 537

livestock that Abu Bakr fought them. There is no report to suggest that the Prophet ﷺ or those who came after him forced the people to pay zakâh on invisible kinds of wealth, unless they brought it without being forced. Rather it was a trust that they paid, because it was in their possession and they were entrusted with it. But with regard to livestock, that is a ruling to which they were subject, and rulings among people were to include visible wealth, but between them and Allâh, they were required to pay zakâh on both visible and invisible wealth.[1]

His opinion on zakâh on a debt owed to a creditor

It was narrated from al-Sâ'ib ibn Yazeed that 'Uthmân ﷺ used to say: Zakâh should be paid on a debt which, if you wanted, you could get it back from the borrower, and he is able to pay it off, but you do not ask for it out of shyness or as a favour; then zakâh is due on it.[2]

And it was narrated that 'Uthmân said: Pay zakâh on it - i.e., a debt - if it is with someone who is able to pay it off.[3]

From these two statements of 'Uthmân it is clear that zakâh is due on the debt owed to the creditor if the debtor is able to pay it back and the creditor is able to get the money back from the debtor, but he feels too shy to remind the debtor of it, or if the creditor leaves it with the debtor as favour; favour here means keeping quiet and not asking for the debt, in return for some favour that he may receive from the debtor.[4]

Borrowing money from the zakâh fund and spending it on the public interest

'Uthmân ﷺ took money from the zakâh funds and spent it on the war effort and on other kinds of public expenditure. He spent

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *al-Muntakhab min as-Sunnah,* 6/301

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 79

[4] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân,* p. 80

it on *jihad* with the proviso that he would pay it back whenever he could afford it. The ruler has the authority to borrow from one fund for another, and that does not go against Islamic teachings or the tradition of any previous caliph, so long as he is determined to pay back what he took from the zakâh funds.[1]

Some opinions suggest that one of the things on which zakâh may be spent, namely *fi sabeel-illâh* (for the sake of Allâh), means that zakâh funds may be given to those who are fighting in jihad for the sake of Allâh, because their devotion to jihad means that they are not able to work and earn a living. This is not intended to encourage idleness, for these people have given precedence to the interests of Islam over their own interests, and they have given up working for their own sake in order to work for a broader cause, which is striving so that the word of Allâh may be supreme and to spread His religion throughout the earth. Some scholars think that it is permissible to spend zakâh funds in the public interest according to whatever is needed.[2]

Spending zakâh funds on food for the poor and wayfarers

'Uthmân set a new precedent by putting food in the mosque during Ramadân and saying: It is for the devoted worshipper who is staying in the mosque, and for the wayfarer, and the poor.[3] The caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ honoured the Muslims with the zakâh funds, and by doing so he followed the example of the Messenger ﷺ who was the most generous of people and was at his most generous during Ramadân. This precedent that was set by 'Uthmân encouraged the people to observe i'tikâf in the mosques, because their food was readily available, so this kept alive the Prophet's Sunnah of i'tikâf.[4]

Establishing inns with zakâh funds

'Uthmân heard about Abu Sammâl al-Asadi and a number of

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 80

[2] op. cit., p. 81

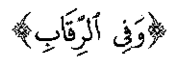
[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/345

[4] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 82, 83

people of Kufah: when food supplies arrived, a caller of theirs would call out: Whoever has no place to stay in Kufah should come and stay as a guest with Abu Sammâl. 'Uthmân designated some houses as inns where strangers who had no place to stay could come and stay. One of these houses was the house of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood in Hudhayl; guests would come and stay in his house in Hudhayl when the area around the mosque got too crowded.[1]

A stipend from the *bayt al-mâl* for every slave

Another idea introduced by 'Uthmân ﷺ was that he gave to every slave in Kufah something from the leftovers of wealth on three days every month, so that they would have extra money to help them out without reducing the stipends that they got from their masters.[2] In most cases the source of this wealth which 'Uthmân distributed to every slave was zakâh, on the grounds that they were entitled to a share of it, because they were one of the eight categories mentioned in the verse of zakâh, in which it says:



"And to free the captives" (*At-Tawbah* 9:60).[3]

The *khums* (one-fifth) of the war booty

The jihad began at the time of the Messenger ﷺ and continued throughout the reigns of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and the reign of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. As a result of that, Islam spread and the territory of the Islamic state expanded. There were many conquests at the time of 'Uthmân, which brought a great deal of booty, including the khums, to the *bayt al-mâl*. That also brought to the *bayt al-mâl* the *jizyah* from those among the people of the Book who preferred to continue

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/273
[2] op. cit., 5/275
[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 84

following their own religions and did not want to fight. So there is a connection between the *bayt al-mâl* and the Islamic conquests. At the time of 'Uthmân the *bayt al-mâl* financed the conquests, either by means of the salaries paid to the troops, or by purchasing the weapons and equipment needed in addition to money that was donated and troops who volunteered. When victory was achieved, the *jizyah* was imposed on those of the people of the Book who did not become Muslim, and the *kharâj* was imposed on the land that was taken by force. If the people of the land became Muslim, they paid the zakâh of their wealth reached the *nisâb* and fulfilled the conditions of zakâh, as it was one of the pillars of Islam, without which a Muslim's Islam cannot be complete. All of these factors played a part in increasing the income of the Islamic state. Allâh permitted war booty to the Muslims, four-fifths of which were distributed among the conquerors and the other fifth of which was paid to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims.[1]

There follow some of the issues that arose as the result of implementing the public financial policy at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân with regard to the *khums* (one-fifth) of the war booty acquired by means of the conquests:

Children were not given a share of the war booty at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân.

It was narrated that Tameem ibn al-Mahri said: I was present when Alexandria was conquered for the second time, but I was not given a share until my people and Quraysh almost came to blows. Some of the people said: Send for Basrah al-Ghifâri and 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir al-Juhani - who were companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ - and ask them about this. So they sent for them and asked them, and they said: See whether his facial hair has started to grow; if so, give him a share. So some of the people looked at me and they found that my facial hair had started to grow, so they gave me a share.[2]

[1] op. cit., p. 86, 87

[2] *Futooh Misr wa Akhbâruha,* p. 121

What this means is that no share is given to children or women, but they are to be given something in return for their help in the Muslim campaigns. This is what was applied at the time of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.[1]

The belongings of the slain went to the one who killed him at the time of 'Uthmân as at the time of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

The belongings of the slain refer to what the slain man was wearing at the time of war, along with his weapons and horse. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ruled that the belongings of the slain were to go to the killer. It was narrated from Abu Qatâdah that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said on the day of Hunayn:

«مَنْ قَتَلَ قَتِيلًا لَهُ عَلَيْهِ بَيِّنَةٌ فَلَهُ سَلَبُهُ»

"Whoever kills a person (in battle) and has proof, his belongings go to him."[2]

What may be understood from this hadeeth is that the killer is not entitled to the belongings of the slain unless he can establish proof that he is the one who killed him. If two people dispute and both claim that they killed someone, then the belongings of the slain go to the one who can establish proof.[3]

After Alexandria broke the treaty, the Byzantines returned, led by Manuel al-Hassa. They landed their ships in Alexandria and 'Amr left them to march towards him, so that they would be faced by the local people. Thus Allâh humiliated them by means of one another. They set out from Alexandria, accompanied by the people of other cities who had broken the treaty, and when they passed through a town they would drink the people's wine and eat their food, and confiscate whatever they could lay their hands on, and 'Amr did not oppose them until they reached Nafyoos,

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân,* p. 93

[2] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Maghâzi,* no. 4321

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân,* p. 93

where (the Muslims) confronted them on land and sea, and fought them with arrows. Then they came out of the sea and joined those who were on land, and they continued to fight with arrows (from a distance). The patriarch of those who had come from the land of the Byzantines came out on a horse, carrying a weapon made of gold, and called for someone to come out and engage in single combat. A man from (the tribe of) Zubayd who was called Hawmal Abu Madhjah went out to confront him, and they fought for a long time, chasing one another with spears. Then the patriarch threw down his spear and took up his sword, and Hawmal also threw down his spear and took up his sword, and 'Amr started shouting: Abu Madhjah. He replied: At your service. The people were standing in ranks on the banks of the Nile, ready for combat. The two men fought for a while with their swords, then the patriarch charged at him, but he threw him to the floor. Then Hawmal took up a dagger that was at his side or strapped to his arm, and struck his enemy's upper chest, weakening him, then he killed him and took his belongings. Then Hawmal died a few days later (may Allâh have mercy on him). After that the Muslims pursued them until they pushed them back Alexandria, then Allâh granted them victory and Manuel al-Hassa was killed.[1]

The value of the booty and the share of the *bayt al-mâl* in one of the conquests of 'Uthmân

In the hadeeth of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Maslamah from someone else it says: We went on a campaign with 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd in North Africa, and he divided the booty among us after setting aside the khums (one-fifth). The share of a horseman was three thousand dinars, two thousand for the horse and one thousand for the rider; and the share of a foot soldier was one thousand dinars. He allocated a share to a man who had died, and gave his family one thousand dinars after he died.[2] From the hadeeth of 'Uthmân ibn Sâlih and others it says: the army of 'Abd-Allâh ibn

[1] *Futooh Misr wa Akhbâruha*, p. 119, 120

[2] op. cit., p. 125

Sa'd was composed of twenty thousand men, and it is known that the khums was paid to the bayt al-mâl, based on the verse in which Allâh says:

﴿وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُۥ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

"And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth (1/5th) of it is assigned to Allâh, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives [of the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)], (and also) the orphans, Al-Masâkeen (the poor) and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allâh and in that which We sent down to Our slave (Muhammad ﷺ) on the Day of Criterion (between right and wrong), the Day when the two forces met (the battle of Badr); and Allâh is Able to do all things" (*Al-Anfâl* 8:41)

At the time of Abu Bakr, after the death of the Messenger ﷺ, the share of the Messenger ﷺ and the "near relatives" was diverted to expenditure on weapons and horses, and 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ did the same after him, as did 'Uthmân ﷺ. The remaining four-fifths of the booty were distributed among the conquerors, with three shares for each horseman and his horse, and one share for each foot soldier. From the two hadeeth quoted above it is possible to work out the value of the khums that was given to the *bayt al-mâl* and of the entire booty. If we assume that the horsemen composed one-tenth of the army, which was twenty thousand strong, and that the rest were foot soldiers, then the calculations are as follows:

2,000 horsemen x 3,000 dinars = 6,000,000 dinars

18,000 foot soldiers x 1,000 dinars = 18,000,000 dinars.

So the total share of the fighters was 24 million dinars, which represents four-fifths of the value of the booty. So the share of the

bayt al-mâl would be one-fifth of the booty, or 6 million dinars. So the total value of the booty taken by the Muslims was 30 million dinars.[1]

Public spending from the one-fifth of the booty

The one-fifth of the booty was spent, in accordance with the text of the verse, on the Messenger ﷺ, his near relatives, orphans, the poor and wayfarers who were all entitled to it. After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, his share and that of the "near relatives" went to the *bayt al-mâl* to be spent on horses and weapons. The caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ exhausted the share of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and the "near relatives" that went to the *bayt al-mâl* to be spent on horses and weapons, because of the many conquests that were achieved during his caliphate and what they required of weapons and horses.[2]

Success of the financial policy in financing the Islamic conquests at the time of 'Uthmân

Among the challenges faced by 'Uthmân ﷺ was the rebellion of some of the conquered lands, but 'Uthmân was able to force the lands that broke treaties to adhere to the treaties with the Islamic state and submit to its rule.

In the light of the new conquests, we may say that the financial policy that was adopted at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân gave the results that it was designed to produce, whether that was by means of financing these conquests or by means of these victories which brought great amounts of booty, of which the *bayt al-mâl* got its share, but it also had other sources of income such as the zakâh of those who became Muslim and the jizyah of those people of the Book who refused to become Muslim, and the *kharâj* on their lands.[3]

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 95

[2] op. cit., p. 97

[3] op. cit., p. 99

Public income from the *jizyah* at the time of 'Uthmân

Final shape of details of the *jizyah* at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ

The rulings and principles of *jizyah*, and the system of how to apply it and acquire it, were finalized at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb. Hence the role of the *bayt al-mâl* at the time of 'Uthmân was to receive whatever was collected of *jizyah* after agreeing on its value. The state was to approve whatever previous deals were already in effect or to initiate new deals, and the state was to guarantee for all those who paid the *jizyah* all rights that resulted from this payment.[1]

Examples of *jizyah* income received by the *bayt al-mâl*

(a) During his governorship of Kufah at the time of 'Uthmân, al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah invaded Azerbaijan, where he made a peace deal with its people in return for 800,000 dirhams. They stopped paying it when 'Umar died, so he attacked them with the army and subjugated them, and got the payment again.[2]

(b) When 'Uthmân sent 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd to North Africa, the one with whom he made the treaty was the patriarch of North Africa, Jarjeer, in return for 2,520, 000 dinars. And 'Abd-Allâh made a treaty with them in return for three hundred qintars of gold (perhaps that is equivalent to the first amount).[3]

(c) The treaty of Cyprus was given in return for seven thousand dinars to be paid to the Muslims.[4]

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 103

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 2/246

[3] op. cit., 5/255

[4] op. cit., 5/261

(d) Sa'eed ibn Sâlih made a peace deal with the people of Jarjân. Sometimes they would bring him one hundred thousand and say: This is our deal. And sometimes they would bring two hundred thousand and sometimes three hundred thousand.[1]

(e) 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir conquered Nishapur and went out to Sarkhas. The people of Marw sent word to him asking him for a peace treaty, so he sent Ibn Hâtim to them, and he made a peace treaty with the chieftain of Marw in return for two million; another report says that he made a peace treaty with him in return for sixty thousand dirhams.[2]

(f) Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays marched to Balkh and besieged it, and its people made a peace treaty with him in return for four hundred thousand, and he agreed to that. He told his cousin Usayd ibn al-Mutashammis to take from them what they had agreed to.[3]

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân implements the deal that the Prophet ﷺ had made with the people of Najrân

The Prophet ﷺ had agreed to the terms stipulated between him and the people of Najrân, and had that written in a document for them which explained the terms and conditions, including their paying the *jizyah* and the amount thereof. Then after the Messenger ﷺ died, they came to Abu Bakr ﷺ who wrote a document for them that included the same conditions. After 'Umar ﷺ was appointed caliph, they came to him. 'Umar expelled them from Najrân al-Yemen and settled them in Najrân al-'Irâq, because he feared (their plots) against the Muslims, and he wrote a peace deal with them.[4] When 'Umar died and 'Uthmân ibn

[1] op. cit., 5/318
[2] op. cit., 5/307
[3] *al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 74
[4] ibid.

'Affân ﷺ succeeded him, they came to him in Madînah and he wrote the following letter for them to al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, who was the governor:

In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From the slave of Allâh 'Uthmân, the Ameer al-Mu'mineen, to al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah. May the peace of Allâh be upon you. I praise Allâh, besides Whom there is no other god. To proceed: The bishops, priests and prominent figures among the people of Najrân who are in Iraq came to me, complained to me and showed me the conditions that 'Umar agreed to with them. I know what they have suffered because of some Muslims, so I have reduced their burden of *jizyah* by thirty suits, and I have done that for the sake of Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, and I have guaranteed to them all the land that 'Umar granted to them in return for their land in Yemen. So treat them kindly for they are under our protection, and I know some of them personally. Look at the document that 'Umar wrote for them and fulfil all its conditions. And when you have read the document, give it back to them. Wa'l-salâm.[1] That was on the fifteenth of Sha'bân 27 AH.[2]

Several things become clear from this, as follows:

(a) That 'Uthmân ﷺ fulfilled the covenant of the Messenger ﷺ and the covenant of his two companions (may Allâh be pleased with them both) who came after him, and that was based on general Islamic principles which state that whoever makes a contract, deal or promise must fulfil it.

(b) 'Uthmân reduced the *jizyah* for them and gave them all the land they were entitled to, and he asked his governor al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah to fulfil the terms mentioned in the document between them and 'Umar, and to treat them

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 105

[2] ibid.

kindly, because they were people who were under protection.[1]

The people of the Book are under the protection of the Muslims so long as they pay the *jizyah*

After the victory of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas in Alexandria, when he had acquired a great deal of booty that had been taken from the villages during the war, the people of the villages who had not broken the treaty came to him and said: We adhered to our treaty, but these thieves (i.e., the Byzantines) came and took our property and livestock, and our property is with you now. So 'Amr returned to them whatever of their property they recognized and could prove was theirs. Some of them said to 'Amr ibn al-'Aas: The way you have treated us is not permissible. You should have fought to protect us because we were under your protection and we did not break the treaty; as for those who broke it, may Allâh cast them away.[2] Look at how the system of *jizyah* gave them rights that they adhered to, which was protection in return for what they paid, even though they did not take part with the Muslims in defending the land, rather they paid it in return for some rights that they were granted from the Islamic state, one of which was the right to protection and welfare. 'Amr ibn al-'Aas honoured these rights and returned their property to them.[3]

Contribution of *ahl al-dhimmah* to public expenditure at the time of 'Uthmân

It maybe noted with regard to *jizyah* during the second conquest of Alexandria during the caliphate of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, that the ruler of Akhna - whose name was Talma -came to 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and said: Tell us what each of us has to pay of *jizyah*, so that we may do our best. 'Amr said, pointing to the corner of a church: You are just a storage facility for us; if our

---

[1] op. cit., p. 106

[2] op. cit., p. 106

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 106

burden increases, your burden will increase, and if (our burden) is reduced, (your burden) will be reduced. The ruler of Akhna became angry, so he went out to the Byzantines and brought them (to fight), but Allâh defeated them and Akhna was taken prisoner and was brought to 'Amr. The people said to him: Kill him. He said: No. It was said: When he was brought to 'Amr, he put a crown on his head and clothed him in a purple cloak, and he said to him: How could you find people like those? So he agreed to pay the *jizyah*. And it was said to Talma: Why don't you go to the king of the Byzantines? He said: If I go to him he would kill me and say: You killed my companions.[1]

When we analyze the statement of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas, You are just a storage facility for us; if our burden increases, your burden will increase, and if (our burden) is reduced, (your burden) will be reduced, we come to the following conclusions about the principles of the financial policy with regard to non-Muslims at the time of 'Uthmân:

(a) The *ahl al-dhimmah* contributed to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims by means of what they paid of *jizyah*, so they were a storehouse or source of income for the *bayt al-mâl*, from which the *bayt al-mâl* acquired its share of their wealth in the form of *jizyah*.

(b) This share of the wealth of *ahl al-dhimmah* was determined by the burdens carried by the state: if these burdens increased then the *jizyah* would increase, and if they decreased, then the *jizyah* would decrease.

(c) This fluctuation in the rate of the *jizyah* - increasing and decreasing - depending on the burdens of the state, is based on the principle that all citizens should carry a share of the burden so that everyone contributes as much as he can, in such a way that achieves justice in the distribution of burdens, in the light of the

[1] *Futooh Misr wa Akhbâruha*, p. 102

recommendations made by the Messenger ﷺ with regard to treating *ahl al-dhimmah* well in general.[1]

Public income from the kharâj and 'ushoor at the time of 'Uthmân

Kharâj

The Islamic conquests expanded at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ, which resulted in the agricultural lands of the conquered regions coming under the control of the Islamic state. 'Umar regarded these lands as *fay'* for the Muslims and left them in the hands of the people of the Book who preferred to adhere to their own religions, so that they could cultivate them and pay *kharâj* on the land to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims. The *kharâj* from these lands increased the income of the *bayt al-mâl* at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ because of the expansion of the Islamic conquests during his reign.[2]

'Ushoor (one-tenth paid on trade goods)

The *'ushoor* system was established at the time of 'Umar ﷺ on the bases that he laid out. At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ it seems that in general the income of the *bayt al-mâl* from the one-tenth paid on trade goods increased as a result of the expansion of the Islamic state, because of the conquests that were achieved during his reign and as a result of the increase in the wealth of some individuals in general, especially in the first years of the reign of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, which were distinguished by stability and an increase in purchasing power which increased the demand for goods. The increase in the demand for goods called for an increase in import activities, which became subject to the *'ushoor* on trade goods once the conditions for the imposing of this duty were met. Among the factors that led to this increase in payments of *'ushoor* at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was the increase in prices,

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 107

[2] op. cit., p. 113

because an increase in prices in turn leads to an increase in the total of *'ushoor* payments, because it is a tax that is based on the value of the goods, not a payment that is taken for certain types of goods.[1]

The policy of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân in allocating land

Abu Bakr ﷺ continued the policy of the Prophet ﷺ in allocating land to the people so that they could cultivate and develop it. He allocated to az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm some unused land between al-Jarf and Qanâh[2] , and he allocated to Majâ'ah ibn Marârah al-Hanafi land in a village in al-Yamâmah called al-Khudrama.[3] He wanted to allocate some land to al-Zabarqân ibn Badr, but then he changed his mind when 'Umar ﷺ objected. He also wanted to allocate to 'Uyaynah ibn Husn al-Fazâri and al-Aqra' ibn Hâbis al-Tameemi some barren land that they wanted to cultivate, but then he changed his mind based on the opinion of 'Umar which was that there was no need to soften their hearts towards Islam. He said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to soften your hearts but Islam was weak at that time, but now Allâh has made Islam strong, so now go and work hard for yourselves.

It is clear that 'Umar did not object to the principle of allocating land to make use of it, rather it had to do with specific people whose hearts he did not think needed to be softened towards Islam. 'Umar allocated land on a large scale with the aim of cultivating it, following the Prophet's policy. He announced: O people, whoever revives dead land, it is his.[4] There are *da'eef* (weak) reports which describe 'Umar taking away allocated land if it was not developed.[5] One *da'eef* report states that there was a three year limit from the date of allocation. It is proven that 'Umar

[1] op. cit., p. 123

[2] *at-Tabaqât al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/104

[3] *'Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah* by al-'Umari, p. 220

[4] op. cit., p. 221

[5] op. cit., p. 221

ﷺ allocated some dead land to Khawwân ibn Jubayr and he allocated all the land of al-'Aqeeq to az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm, and the land of Yanboo' to 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, then a great deal of water started running through it so 'Ali ﷺ allocated it as a waqf for the poor.[1]

When 'Uthmân ﷺ became caliph, he expanded the allocation of land, especially in the conquered regions, because many owners of conquered land left their lands and fled, so the land came under the direct control of the state, to be invested, and 'Uthmân ﷺ allocated it lest it be neglected.[2] But Imam Ahmad thinks that he allocated land in al-Sawâd too, and there can be no doubt that a great deal of the abandoned lands were in al-Sawâd. Whatever the case, the allocation of land increased the income from nine million (9,000,000) dirhams per year during the caliphate of 'Umar ﷺ to fifty million (50,000,000) dirhams during the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ, which proves the success of his policy in managing abandoned land. The sources also mention a list of the names of those to whom 'Uthmân ﷺ allocated land, most of whom were not from Quraysh, but most of the reports about 'Uthmân's allocation of land are *da'eef* (weak), but in general they prove that he expanded the allocation of land. It is useful to list the names of those to whom land was allocated. They were:

- √ 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood al-Hudhali (land between the two rivers of Beel and al-Sawâd)
- √ 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir (Isteeniya)
- √ Khabbâb ibn al-Aratt al-Tameemi (Sa'nabi - a village in al-Sawâd)
- √ 'Adiyy ibn Hâtim al-Tâ'i (al-Rawha' - one of the villages of Baghdad on the 'Abs river)

---

[1] op. cit., p. 222

[2] op. cit., p. 223

- √ Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs al-Zuhri al-Qurashi (the village of Hormuz in Barri Fâris
- √ Al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm
- √ Usâmah ibn Zayd al-Kalbi
- √ Sa'eed ibn Zayd al-'Adawi al-Qurashi
- √ Jareer ibn 'Abd-Allâh al-Bajali (land on the banks of the Euphrates)
- √ Ibn Habbâr
- √ Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh al-Tameemi al-Qurashi (al-Nashastbah - land in Kufah)
- √ Wâ'il ibn Hajar al-Hadrami (land near the village of Zurârah in Kufah)
- √ Khâlid ibn 'Arfatah al-Qadâ'i (land beside Hammâm A'yan in Kufah)
- √ Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi (Tayzanbâdh - a place between Kufah and al-Qâdisiyyah)
- √ Abu Mureed al-Hanafi (land in al-Ahwâz on the Teeri river)
- √ Nâfi' ibn al-Hârith ibn Kildah al-Thaqafi (a piece of land in Shatt 'Uthmân in Basra)
- √ Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (a piece of land in Hammâm 'Amrah)
- √ 'Uthmân ibn Abi'l-'Aas al-Thaqafi (Shatt 'Uthmân in Basra)

It seems that the previous owners' abandonment of this land turned it into disused land, and 'Uthmân ﷺ allocated it so that it might be cultivated and developed. It seems that Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân allocated some pieces of land on the coast of Syria so

that they might be developed and prepared as border posts to ward off Byzantine attacks. He also allocated pieces of land in Antakiyah (Antioch) on 'Uthmân's orders, and another piece of land in Qaleeqala.[1] As for his allocating Fadak to Marwân ibn al-Hakam, nothing is known of that from any sound source, but it was said that the one who allocated Fadak to Marwân was Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân.[2] 'Uthmân's policy in allocating land contributed to the increase of income for the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims, because of the zakâh paid by all the recipients on their wealth, when it met the conditions of zakâh. 'Uthmân's policy of allocating land succeeded, based on the increase in the state's revenue from its own property in Iraq, which reached 50 million dirhams after it was nine million dirhams at the time of 'Umar.[3]

'Uthmân's policy in allocating land for grazing

This refers to land that was allocated for the care of camels and horses that were owned by the state. He continued to protect Wadi al-Naqee' as it had been protected during the caliphates of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them both), as the Prophet ﷺ had set it aside for horses.[4] It was eighty kilometres long, starting from forty kilometres south of Madînah.[5] The areas set aside for grazing increased during the caliphate of 'Umar because of the increase in numbers of camels and horses owned by the state and kept in readiness for *jihad*. That included the grazing area of al-Rabdhah that was set aside for the zakâh camels, over which he appointed his freed slave Hanniy and advised him to allow those who owned a few camels to let them graze there, in exclusion to those who were rich. He allocated land for grazing in Diyâr Bani Tha'labah despite their protests, which he answered by saying: The land is

---

[1] *'Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 224

[2] op. cit., p. 225

[3] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 118

[4] *Saheeh Sunan Abi Dawood*, by al-Albâni, 2/595

[5] *'Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 225, 226

the land of Allâh, and it should be allocated for the camels which belong to Allâh (i.e., zakâh camels).[1] 'Uthmân followed the way of those who came before him with regard to allocation of grazing land because the state expanded and the conquests increased during his reign. The idea of allocating grazing land had been limited to the animals given as zakâh, but 'Uthmân ﷺ expanded it and increased the amount of allocated land as the number of Muslims (and therefore the number of animals given as zakâh) increased.[2]

Because Abu Bakr and 'Umar had allocated land for grazing without anyone objecting to that, 'Uthmân took the matter further because there were so many camels and other livestock that had been given as zakâh, and there were too many arguments among the herdsmen who cared for the zakâh animals, so no one objected to his actions.[3] Rather what Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân did with regard to allocating grazing land became well-known among the Sahâbah, and no one objected to it, so it is regarded as consensus.[4] And Ibn Qudâmah narrated that there was consensus on this matter.[5]

Types of public expenditure at the time of 'Uthmân

The salary of the caliph

'Uthmân ﷺ did not take anything from the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims. He was the wealthiest of Quraysh and the most involved in trade, and he used to spend on his family and those around him from his own wealth.

Salary of governors from the *bayt al-mâl*

At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ, the Islamic state was divided into

---

[1] *at-Tabaqât*, 3/326. The report is *saheeh*.

[2] *Nizâm al-Khilâfah fi'l-Fikr al-Islami*, by Dr. Mustafa Hilmi, p. 78

[3] op. cit., p. 78

[4] *Nizâm al-Arâdi fi Sadr al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah*, p. 169

[5] *al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudâmah, 5/581

provinces, each of which was ruled by a governor appointed by the caliph, who took his salary from the *bayt al-mâl* and ran the affairs of the province in accordance with the rulings of Islamic sharee'ah. The fact that the caliph did not appoint a representative to be in charge of the provincial *bayt al-mâl* indicates that it was part of the governor's role to supervise the collection of the province's income, which was the *jizyah, kharâj* and one-tenth on trade goods ('ushoor) and spend from that income on provincial affairs. Anything that was left over was to be sent to the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims in Madînah. As for the zakâh which was received from the wealthy in the province, it was spent on the poor in the same region.[1]

Expenditure from *bayt al-mâl* on salaries

The *bayt al-mâl* paid salaries to the troops in addition to whatever share of the booty they got. The troops of each province got their salaries from the provincial *bayt al-mâl*. For example, with regard to the troops of Egypt, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân wrote the following letter to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, the governor of Egypt, telling him to pay the salaries of the troops stationed in Alexandria: You know how concerned the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* is about Alexandria, because the Byzantines broke the terms of the peace treaty twice. So keep troops stationed in Alexandria and pay them their salaries, and rotate them every six months.[2]

Public expenditure on the *Hajj* from the *bayt al-mâl*

At the time of 'Uthmân, public expenditure on the *Hajj* came from the *bayt al-mâl*. The covering of the Ka'bah was made from Qubâti cloth, which was a fabric made of linen from Egypt.[3]

Financing the rebuilding of the Prophet's Mosque from the *bayt al-mâl*

The people spoke to 'Uthmân when he was first appointed

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân*, p. 130

[2] op. cit., p. 140

[3] op. cit., 140, 141

caliph, asking him to expand the Prophet's Mosque, because it had become too crowded at *Jumu'ah* prayer, due to the spread of conquests and the great increase in the number of inhabitants in Madînah. 'Uthmân consulted the wise people and they agreed to demolish the mosque then rebuild and expand it. 'Uthmân led the people in praying *Zuhr*, then he ascended the minbar and praised and glorified Allâh, then he said: O people, I have decided to demolish the Mosque of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then expand it. I bear witness that I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ say:

«مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا لِلهِ، بَنَى اللهُ لَهُ مِثْلَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

"Whoever builds a mosque, Allâh will build for him a house in Paradise."[1]

I have a precedent for that in the ruler who came before me, as 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb expanded it. I have consulted the wise people among the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and they agreed to demolishing it then rebuilding and expanding it. The people approved of that and prayed for him, then the next day he called the workers and was present there himself.[2]

Financing the expansion of al-Masjid al-Harâm from the *bayt al-mâl*

At the time of the Messenger ﷺ, the Ka'bah had nothing around it but a narrow courtyard in which the people used to pray. The mosque remained like that until the caliphate of Abu Bakr. At the time of 'Umar the mosque was expanded, when he bought the houses around the mosque and demolished them, and incorporated the area into the sacred House of Allâh, and built a low wall around it, and installed lamps to illuminate it at night. That was because the mosque was too crowded with pilgrims who came to perform the obligatory duty of *Hajj* after the conquests of Islam expanded and people entered the religion of

---

[1] *al-Musnad,* no. 434, (1/61) its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[2] *Al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/60; *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/267

Allâh in crowds. When the mosque became too small a second time during 'Uthmân's reign, he followed the example of 'Umar and added to the Ka'bah some land that he bought, and surrounded it with a wall that was no taller than a man, as 'Umar had done before.[1] The governors also built mosques in their provinces and spent on them from the provincial *bayt al-mâl*, as happened in the building of Masjid al-Rahmah in Alexandria, and a mosque in Istakhr during the conquests in the east.[2]

Spending on the establishment of the first navy

The *bayt al-mâl* played a role in the establishment of the first navy in Islam, at the time of 'Uthmân. The role of the navy in the Islamic conquests will be discussed below, in sha Allah, when we discuss the conquests.[3]

Spending on moving the port from al-Shu'aybah to Jeddah

In 26 AH, the people of Makkah spoke to 'Uthmân about moving the port from Shu'aybah, which was the old port of Makkah during the *Jâhiliyyah*, to where it is now in Jeddah, because it was closer. 'Uthmân went out to Jeddah to see its location, and he ordered that the port be moved there. Then he went into the sea and washed himself with seawater, and said: It is blessed. And he said to those who were with him: Go into the sea and wash yourselves with seawater, but keep your izârs (waist-wrappers) on. Then he set out from Jeddah via 'Asfân to Madînah, and the people abandoned the port of al- Shu'aybah at that time, and Jeddah has remained the port of Makkah until now.[4]

Digging wells with funds from the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims

Among the works that were financed by the *bayt al-mâl* of the

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/250; *Dhu'n-Noorayn*, by Muhammad Rasheed, p. 25

[2] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 147, 148

[3] op. cit., p. 148

[4] *Dhu'n-Noorayn 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Muhammad Rasheed, p. 26

Muslims at the time of 'Uthmân was the digging of a well in Madînah which was called Bi'r Arees, which was two miles from Madînah. This occurred in 30 AH. It so happened that 'Uthmân sat in the edge of this well with the ring of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on his finger, and the ring slipped from his finger and fell into the well. They looked for it in the well and took out the water, but they could not find it. He offered a huge reward to the one who found it, and he was very distressed by this incident. When he gave up hope of finding it, he had another ring made of silver that looked like it, and had the words "Muhammad Rasool Allâh" engraved on it, and he wore it on his finger until he was killed. When he was killed the ring disappeared from his hand and no one knew who took it.[1]

Spending on muezzins from the *bayt al-mâl*

'Uthmân ﵁ was the first one to give the muezzins money from the *bayt al-mâl*. Imam al-Shâfa'i said: The muezzins were given salaries by the imam of guidance 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân.[2] 'Uthmân ﵁ paid them for giving the adhân.[3]

Financing the sublime aims of Islam

It is clear from the study of public expenditure discussed above that the *bayt al-mâl* played a role in financing the sublime aims of the Islamic state. In addition to expenditure on state administration and the interests of the people, money was spent on spreading Islam so that the word of Allâh would become supreme. The *bayt al-mâl* financed the establishment of the first navy of the Islamic state; houses of Allâh were built by financing the construction and renovation of mosques; and salaries were paid to muezzins, governors, judges, troops and government agents and workers. Money was also spent on Hajj to the sacred House of Allâh, and the covering of the Ka'bah which was the qiblah of Islam and the Muslims. The *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/161; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/284

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 14

[3] ibid.

also funded the digging of wells to provide drinking water for all citizens of the Islamic state. From the income of the state, such as zakâh and the khums (one-fifth) of the war booty, the weak sectors of society in the Islamic state were sponsored, namely the poor and needy, orphans, strangers and wayfarers, and slaves were set free.[1]

Continuation of the stipend system at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân

The stipend system continued at the time of 'Uthmân as it had been at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (may Allâh be pleased with them both). Those who had come to Islam first were the one who were given more. He wrote to his governor in Kufah informing him of that, and said: Give precedence to those who came to Islam first and those to whom Allâh granted victory in that land. Make those who followed them to these lands followers to them, unless they become slower in following the truth and supporting it, and the others take on this mission of fighting and defending, recognize the status of each of them, and give them all their share on the basis of truth. Knowing people is a means to achieve justice.[2] When the Islamic conquests spread during his reign, the income of the state increased, which led the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ to set up storehouses.[3] This in turn was reflected by the amounts that he gave out. The troops' salaries were increased by 100 dirhams for each soldier. This was the first increase in the people's stipends and the caliphs who came after him followed him in increasing the troops' salaries.[4]

al-Hasan said: I saw the caller of 'Uthmân calling out: O people, come and take what you need of clothing, so they took suits of clothing. (And he said:) Come and take what you need of

---

[1] *as-Siyâsah al-Mâliyyah li 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 150

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/280

[3] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah fi'l-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah* (2/6836); *an-Nujoom al-Zâhirah* (1/87)

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari* (5/145)

ghee and honey. Al-Hasan said: A lot of provision, a lot of blessings, and harmony among people; no believer on earth fears another believer, rather he loves him, supports him and befriends him.[1] The caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ also paid attention to the border outposts and the troops stationed there; he ordered his commanders to give them their stipends and provisions and to increase it for the troops stationed on the borders.[2]

Effect of increased abundance of wealth on social and economic life

At the time of 'Uthmân, the *kharâj* increased and wealth came to him from all directions, so he built storehouses for it. That in turn affected the economy and the society. It was narrated from Abu Ishâq that his grandfather passed by 'Uthmân and he said to him: How many children do you have, O Shaykh? He said: I have such and such. He said: We allocate to you fifteen (hundred) - meaning one thousand five hundred - and we allocate to your dependents one thousand.[3] And it was narrated that Muhammad ibn Hilâl al-Madeeni said: May father told me that my grandmother used to enter upon 'Uthmân. She did not come one day and he said to her family: Why do I not see So and so? His wife said: *O Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, last night she gave birth to a boy. She said: And he sent me fifty dirhams and some clothing. Then he said: This is the stipend for your son and this clothing also for him. After one year, we will increase it to one hundred.[4] 'Uthmân also spent on the people of al-'Awâli in Madînah, providing food and clothing.[5] When the commander Qutn ibn 'Amr al-Hilâli gave four thousand dirhams to the army that was with him, who numbered four thousand men, as an encouragement, the governor of Basra, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir,

---

[1] *Majma' al-Zawâ'id*, 9/93, 94; *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 52

[2] *Futooh Misr*, p. 192; *Fath al-Buldân li'l-Baladhuri*, 1/152-157

[3] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah*, 2/769

[4] op. cit., 2/769

[5] *at-Tabaqât*, 3/298

thought it was too much; he wrote to the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ telling him about that, but the caliph allowed it and said: Anything that helps with (jihad) for the sake of Allâh is permissible.[1]

'Uthmân introduced the idea that the stipend of a Muslim soldier could be given to his female heirs, his daughters and wives. Al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm said to the caliph 'Uthmân, after the death of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood ﷺ: Give me the stipend of 'Abd-Allâh, for the children of 'Abd-Allâh are more entitled to it than the *bayt al-mâl*. So he gave him fifteen thousand.[2]

Activities in the areas of agriculture, manufacturing and trade also increased at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. Because of the bounty that Allâh bestowed upon the Muslims as the result of the conquests, the people of Madînah in particular and the Muslims in general began to live a life of ease and plenty, and this wealth was accompanied by many cultural developments that had been unknown in Arabia prior to the great conquests. The Muslims saw what other nations had and adopted things from them, and this process became widespread during the caliphate of 'Uthmân. Some of the Sahâbah built large houses and the foreigners who had been taken captive during the conquests played a role in the development of social and economic life.[3]

'Uthmân and his relatives, and stipends from the *bayt al-mâl*

'Uthmân was accused by the rebels and thugs of being extravagant with the *bayt al-mâl* and giving most of it to his own relatives. This accusation was supported by a propaganda campaign against him that was led by the Saba'is (followers of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba') and the Râfidi Shi'ah, which found its way into the history books and was treated by some intellectuals and historians as if it were true, although it is false and was never

[1] *al-Awâ'il* by al-'Askari, 2/26, 27

[2] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah*, 2/770

[3] *al-Hadârah al-'Arabiyyah al-Islamiyyah*, by Dr. Waddâh al-Samad, p. 114

proven, because it is inconsistent. What was proven of his being generous towards his relatives is to be regarded as commendable and not as shortcomings.

1- 'Uthmân was extremely wealthy and upheld the ties of kinship[1] by giving his relatives a great deal. Those evildoers picked on that and said that he was giving to his relatives from the *bayt al-mâl,* but 'Uthmân ﷺ defending himself by saying: I love my relatives and I give to them, but my love for them did not make-me support them when they were in the wrong, rather I treat them the same as everyone else. But as for my giving to them, I only give to them from my own wealth, for I do not regard the wealth of the Muslims as permissible for me or for any of the people. I used to give a lot to the people from my own wealth at the time of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, Abu Bakr and 'Uthmân. At that time I was young and more careful about what I spent, but when I became the eldest of my family and approached the age of dying, and I gave my wealth to my family, then the evildoers said what they said.[2] 'Uthmân had divided his wealth and his land among Banu Umayyah, and he regarded his children as the same as those who had been given some of his wealth. So he started with the sons of Abu'l-'Aas and gave each man among them ten thousand, so they took one hundred thousand (in all). He gave a similar amount to the sons of 'Uthmân, and he distributed (wealth) to the sons of al-'Aas and the sons of al-'Ays and the sons of Harb.[3] These reports and others which were well-known about him, and the *saheeh ahâdeeth* which speak of his great virtue, all indicate that whatever was said about his extravagance with the *bayt al-mâl* and his spending most of it on himself and his relatives and palaces were just stories that had no basis whatsoever, and were all fabrications

[1] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb,* p. 82

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari* (5/365

[3] ibid.

against him, as 'Uthmân was innocent of what was attributed to him. Taqiy al-Deen ibn Taymiyah said: Some of the fuqaha' suggested that the phrase 'near relatives' [in al-Anfâl 8:41, referring to distribution of war booty] refers to the relatives of the caliph, as al-Hasan and Abu Thawr suggested, and that the Prophet ﷺ used to give to his relatives because of his position as leader of the Muslims. So the 'near relatives' at the time of the Prophet ﷺ were his relatives, and after he died they were the relatives of the one who became leader after him, and that is because supporting the ruler is obligatory, and his relatives will support him and defend him in a way that no one else will do. And he said: In general, most of those who were appointed as rulers after 'Umar appointed some of their relatives to positions of authority or gave generously to some of them in terms of money.[1] And it was said that 'Uthmân disposed of wealth in three ways: (i) the one who was in charge of collecting it deserves payment even if he was independent of means; (ii) the 'near relatives' were the relatives of the ruler; and (iii) the relatives of 'Uthmân formed a large tribe that was not like the tribes of Abu Bakr or 'Umar, so he needed to give to them and appoint them to positions of authority more than Abu Bakr and 'Umar needed to appoint and give to their relatives. This is what was narrated from 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân when he was defending himself.[2]

2- It is narrated in *Tareekh al-Tabari* that when 'Uthmân commanded 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh to march from Egypt to Tunis to conquer it, he said to him: If Allâh grants you the conquest of North Africa, then you will have one-fifth of the one-fifth *(khums)* of the booty that Allâh bestows upon the Muslims, as a bonus. So he set out with his army until they crossed the land of Egypt and penetrated

[1] *Manhâj as-Sunnah,* 3/187, 188

[2] op. cit., 3/237, *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah* by Hamdi Shaheen, p. 163

deep into the land of North Africa and conquered its plains and mountains, and 'Abd-Allâh divided the booty among the troops, and he took one-fifth of the *khums*, and sent the remaining four-fifths to 'Uthmân with Ibn Watheemah al-Nadri. Some people who were with him complained to 'Uthmân about what 'Abd-Allâh had taken, but 'Uthmân said to them: I told him to do that, but if you are not pleased then I will tell him to give it back. They said: We are not pleased. So 'Uthmân ordered 'Abd-Allâh to give it back, and he did so.[1] And it is proven in the Sunnah that something extra may be given to people who demonstrate particular power and strength in jihad.[2]

3- It was too difficult to bring to Madînah the remaining four-fifths and animals that had been taken as booty in North Africa, so Marwân bought all of that for one hundred thousand dirhams. He paid cash for most of it and some of the price was left, and he was the first to go to 'Uthmân with the news of the conquest. The Muslims had been very anxious and worried lest the Muslims meet with disaster in North Africa, so 'Uthmân let him off the remainder of the payment as a reward for his bringing the good news. The ruler has the right to give whatever he sees fit to the bringer of good news in return for his efforts and the importance of his good news. This is what is proven with regard to 'Uthmân giving something to Marwân. What they said about him giving him the *khums* from North Africa is a lie.[3] 'Uthmân ﷺ loved his relatives very much, but that did not make him commit any harâm or wrong action, or engage in misconduct with regard to money or anything else. Rather, false accusations that were fabricated by evil propaganda and the Râfidi Shi'ah against 'Uthmân ﷺ have been inserted into the history books.

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/253

[2] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb,* p. 84

[3] ibid.

The way in which 'Uthmân behaved with his relatives represents a noble aspect of Islam, because Allâh says:

﴿ذَٰلِكَ ٱلَّذِى يُبَشِّرُ ٱللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ ۗ قُل لَّآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا ٱلْمَوَدَّةَ فِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ ۗ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُۥ فِيهَا حُسْنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ﴾

"That is (the Paradise) whereof Allâh gives glad tidings to His slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh – Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): 'No reward do I ask of you for this except to be kind to me for my kinship with you.' And whoever earns a good righteous deed, We shall give him an increase of good in respect thereof. Verily, Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (the deeds of those who are obedient to Him)" (Ash-Shoora 42:23)

﴿وَءَاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا﴾

"And give to the kinsman his due and to the Miskeen (poor) and to the wayfarer. But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift" (Al-Isra' 17:26)

It also shows that he was following a practical aspect of the example of the Prophet ﷺ, because he had seen the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and he knew the way in which the Prophet ﷺ treated people and relatives, which the people who criticized him did not know. He had deeper knowledge than most of the people and he had seen how much the Prophet ﷺ loved his relatives and how kind he was towards them. He gave his paternal uncle al-'Abbâs what he did not give to anyone else when some wealth from Bahrain was brought to him.[1] And he appointed 'Ali, who was his cousin and son-in-law, to a position of authority. 'Uthmân and

[1] *Al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Jizyah*

all the believers had the greatest example in the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.[1]

Ibn Katheer ﷺ said: 'Uthmân was of noble character, very modest and generous. He gave preference to his family and relatives over himself for the sake of Allâh, to soften their hearts by giving them temporary worldly benefits, so as to encourage them to give preference to that which will abide forever over that which is temporary, as the Prophet ﷺ used to give to some people and not others in order to instil guidance and faith in their hearts. Some people criticized him for this quality as some of the Khawârij criticized the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he gave precedence to some over others.[2] It was narrated that Jâbir ibn 'Abd-Allâh ﷺ said: Whilst the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was sharing out the booty at al-Ji'rânah[3] , a man said to him: Be fair. He said:

«لَقَدْ شَقِيتُ إِنْ لَمْ أَعْدِلْ»

"I would be doomed if I were not fair."[4]

'Uthmân argued for his kindness to his family and relatives when addressing the shoora council by saying: I will tell you about me and about that which is under my care. My two companions who came before me (i.e., Abu Bakr and 'Umar) were too strict with themselves with regard to spending money. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to give to his relatives and I have relatives who have many children and little income, so I give some of that which is under my authority. But if you think this is wrong, then I will stop it. [5]

Ibn Taymiyah (ﷺ) refuted those who accused 'Uthmân of favouring his relatives by giving them a great deal from the *bayt al-mâl* by saying: There are reports which say that he used to give

---

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/201

[2] ibid.

[3] al-Ji'rânah: an oasis between al-Tâ'if and Makkah; it is closer to Makkah.

[4] *Al-Bukhâri*, (3138) *Kitâb Fard al-Khums*

[5] *at-Tabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/64

his family a great deal of wealth from the *bayt al-mâl,* to such an extent that he gave four hundred thousand dinars to four men of Quraysh who were his sons-in-law, and he gave Marwân a million dinars. The answer to that is: How can you prove that these reports are true? Yes, he used to give to his relatives but he also used to give to people who were not his relatives. He treated all the Muslims well. Saying that he gave these huge amounts requires sound proof. Moreover it should be noted that this is a blatant lie, because neither 'Uthmân nor any other Rightly-Guided Caliph gave anyone anything near this amount.[1]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Manhâj as-Sunnah,* 3/190

Judicial institutions and some *fiqhi ijtihâds*

The time of 'Uthmân is regarded as a continuation of the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs which is important because of its direct connection and closeness to the era of the Prophet ﷺ. The time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in general, and particularly with regard to the judiciary at that time, was a continuation of the judiciary and of everything that had been established at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, which was applied completely, in letter and in spirit. The importance of the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs was manifested in two basic issues:

- Adherence to the texts of the Prophet's era, following them and persisting in adhering to them.
- Formation of new judiciary bodies to help reinforce the pillars of the vast Islamic state and to deal with various new circumstances.[1]

By the help of Allâh and with his own genius, 'Umar was able to develop the judicial institutions in the Islamic state, so they acquired guidelines and regulations, from which the Caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ benefited when appointing judges and determining

[1] *Tareekh al-Qada' fi'l-Islam* by al-Zuhayli, p. 83, 84

their salaries, judicial specialties, the qualities required of a judge, the sources of judicial rulings, and how judges are to deal with evidence. There were also legal precedents from the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar which judges made use of at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ.

When 'Uthmân was appointed caliph, 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, Zayd ibn Thâbit and al-Sâ'ib ibn Yazeed (may Allâh be pleased with them) were in charge of the judiciary in Madînah. Some researchers say that 'Uthmân did not allow them any independence in passing judgement in any case as the situation had been at the time of 'Umar ﷺ; rather he would examine the cases himself and consult these men and others about the ruling. If their opinion coincided with his, he would pass judgement, otherwise he would examine the matter further. This means that 'Uthmân relieved these three judges of their duties, but he kept them on as consultants in every dispute that was referred to him, but he consulted others too. Some researchers suggest that there is no clear text to show that they were relieved of their duties, and the most that has been narrated indicates that 'Uthmân approved of the judges appointed by 'Umar in Madînah, but he reduced their burden by looking at many serious cases himself, in consultation with them. The reason why there is a difference of opinion about what 'Uthmân did is that there are conflicting reports concerning this issue.

- It was narrated by al-Bayhaqi in his *Sunan* and by Wakee' in *Akhbâr al-Qudât* that 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Sa'eed said: My grandfather told me: I saw 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân in the mosque, when the two disputants came to him. He said to one of them: Go and call 'Ali. And he said to the other: Go and call Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh, az-Zubayr and 'Abd al-Rahmân. So they came and sat down, and he said to (the two disputants): Speak; then he turned to (the three men) and said: Tell me what you think. If they said what coincided with his opinion he would go ahead and pass judgement, and if not, he would examine it further and they would leave after saying salâm.

And it is not known that 'Uthmân appointed any other judge in Madînah until he was killed.

- It says in *Tareekh at-Tabari,* when mentioning the deeds of 'Uthmân: At the time of 'Uthmân, Zayd ibn Thâbit was in charge of the judiciary, which indicates that 'Uthmân kept Zayd in charge of the judiciary and that he had permission to pass judgement in disputes. So long as it is possible to reconcile between the reports, it is better to accept them both, rather than accepting only one without any reason. They may be reconciled by noting that 'Uthmân retained the judges in Madînah to pass judgements in some cases, but he kept some other, more difficult, cases for himself and made it his job to deal with them, in consultation with his companions, including his judges.[1]

'Uthmân sometimes appointed judges for different regions, such as when he appointed Ka'b ibn Soor as the chief judge of Basra, and sometimes he left the judiciary to the governor, such as when he asked his governor in Basra to judge between the people in addition to his tasks as governor. That was after he had dismissed Ka'b ibn Soor. Similarly, Ya'la ibn Umayyah was both governor and judge of San'â'.[2] It may be noted that some governors chose judges for themselves, and the judges were answerable to them, which indicates that governors had greater authority than judges during his caliphate.[3] The reports narrated from 'Uthmân, his letters to his governors, commanders of troops on the borders and to the Muslims in general, suggest that it is most likely that he put governors in charge of the judiciary, to take care of the matter themselves, or to appoint those who were able to deal with it.[4] Although we find a great of correspondence between 'Umar and the judges of the

[1] *an-Nuzum al-Islami,* 1/378; *Waqâ'i' Nadwat Abi Zabi,* 1405 AH.

[2] *'Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 143

[3] *an-Nuzum al-Islamiyyah,* 1/378

[4] ibid.

various regions, we find that such correspondence between 'Uthmân and the judges was very rare.[1]

- **Ibn 'Umar excused himself from the post of judge**

'Uthmân said to Ibn 'Umar: Judge between people. He said: I will not judge between two people or lead two men in prayer. Did you not hear the Prophet ﷺ say:

«مَنْ عَاذَ بِاللهِ فَقَدْ عَاذَ بِمَعَاذٍ»

"Whoever seeks refuge with Allâh has indeed sought (an excellent) refuge."

'Uthmân said: Yes (I heard that). He said: Then I seek refuge with Allâh from being appointed by you. So he let him off, and said: Do not tell anyone about that.[2]

- **Courthouses**

Some history books state that one of the legacies of 'Uthmân was the setting up of courthouses, as is clear from a report narrated by Ibn 'Asâkir from Abu Sâlih, the freed slave of al-'Abbâs, who said: al-'Abbâs sent me to 'Uthmân to invite him, and I found him in the courthouse... If this is saheeh, then 'Uthmân was the first one to set up courthouses in Islam. The two caliphs before him used to hear cases in the mosque, as was well known.[3]

- The most famous judges during the caliphate of 'Uthmân

1- Zayd ibn Thâbit (Madînah)

2- Abu'l-Darda' (Damascus)

3- Ka'b ibn Soor (Basra)

4- Abu Moosa al-'Ash'ari (Basra - in addition to being

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/92

[2] *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad*, no. 475 (1/66). It is *hasan li ghayrihi*.

[3] *Ashhar Mashâheer al-Islam*, 4/740

governor thereof)

5- Shurayh (Kufah)

6- Ya'la ibn Umayyah(Yemen)

7- Thamâmah (San'â')

8- 'Uthmân ibn Qays ibn Abi'l-'Aas (Egypt).[1]

The Rightly-Guided Caliph also left behind fiqhi rulings in the fields of *qisâs*, offences, *hudood* punishments, *ta'zeer* punishments, acts of worship and transactions between people, which had a clear effect on the schools of fiqh. There follow some of the rulings issued by 'Uthmân:

Qisâs, hudood punishments and *ta'zeer* punishments

The first case that 'Uthmân dealt with was a case of murder:

The first case in which 'Uthmân passed judgement was the case of 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Umar, when he went to the daughter of Abu Lu'lu'ah, the killer of 'Umar, and killed her. He also struck a Christian man called Jufaynah with the sword and killed him, and he struck al-Hormuzân, the ruler of Tastar, and killed him. It was said that these two had conspired with Abu Lu'lu'ah to kill 'Umar. And Allâh knows best.[2] 'Umar had ordered that he ('Ubayd-Allâh) be imprisoned so that he might be judged by the caliph who came after him. When 'Uthmân was appointed caliph and met with the people, the first case he examined was that of 'Ubayd-Allâh. 'Ali said: It is not fair to let him off, and he said that he should be executed. Some of the *Muhâjireen* said: How can you kill him today when his father was slain yesterday? 'And Ibn al-'Aas said: *O Ameer al-Mu'mineen,* Allâh has spared you from

[1] *'Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 159, 160

[2] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/154

involvement in this incident; it is something that did not happen during your reign, so leave it alone. So 'Uthmân paid the diyah for those who had been slain from his own wealth, because he was in charge of them, but they had no heir other than the *bayt al-mâl*, and the ruler should do what he sees fit. And he let 'Ubayd-Allâh go.[1]

There is a report from al-Tabari which says that al-Qamâdhbân ibn al-Hormuzân forgave 'Ubayd-Allâh. It was narrated that Abu Mansoor said: I heard al-Qamâdhbân speaking about the killing of his father. He said: The Persians in Madînah used to spend time together. Fayrooz passed by my father and he had a two-headed dagger with him. He took it from him and said: What will you do with this in this land? He said: I feel safe with it. A man saw him, and when 'Umar was killed he said: I saw this (dagger) with al-Hormuzân, and he was giving it to Fayrooz. So 'Ubayd-Allâh went and killed him. When 'Uthmân became caliph, he called me and gave me the option to retaliate, then he said: O my son, this is your father's killer; you have more right to deal with him than us, so go and kill him. I took him out and everyone came out to see what I would do with him, but they were asking me to let him off. I said: Is it up to me whether I kill him? They said: Yes. I said: Can you protect him? They said: No. I let him go for the sake of Allâh and for their sake, and they carried me on their shoulders, and by Allâh, they carried me home on their shoulders.[2]

There is no contradiction between this report and the other report which says that the caliph 'Uthmân let 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Umar off and paid the diyah himself to the heirs of al-Hormuzân, because all the Sahâbah agreed that the son of al-Hormuzân had the right to retaliate, but he responded to their hope that he would let him off, as mentioned above. Moreover, the caliph's pardon was based on his authority to investigate the crime and pass judgement concerning it; this is the role of the caliph, not of the

[1] ibid.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/243. Its *isnâd* is not *saheeh*.

victim's son. 'Ubayd-Allâh had transgressed against the rights of the caliph, hence the report that speaks of forgiveness refers to a pardon for transgressing these rights. This transgression on the part of 'Ubayd-Allâh also stemmed from the fact that his action caused the state to lose an important opportunity to find out about the "cells" connected to the crime, and the criminals and others who were involved in this conspiracy. The caliph was also in a position to issue a pardon because those who were killed had no heirs, namely Jufaynah and the daughter of the Magian killer. There is no dispute in the reports and historical sources that the dagger with which 'Umar was killed had been in the hands of al-Hormuzân and Jufaynah before this incident. That was witnessed by two of the Sahâbah, namely 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf and 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Abi Bakr. The report of 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Abi Bakr says that the killer Abu Lu'lu'ah was with these two partners, and the three of them were whispering together. When he startled them, the dagger fell from their hands. After 'Umar was killed, they found that it was the same dagger that the two witnesses had described.[1] Therefore al-Hormuzân and Jufaynah deserved to be killed. As for the daughter of Abu Lu'lu'ah, who had killed himself to conceal his two co-conspirators, she was killed wrongfully and no one should have been executed in retaliation. 'Ubayd-Allâh thought that she was one of the partners in the killing, since she had been hiding the weapon for her father.[2]

The execution of the thieves

Some of the young men of Kufah during the governorship of al-'Waleed ibn 'Uqbah broke into the house of Ibn al-Haysamân al-Khuzâ'i and out numbered him. He warned them, then he drew his sword. When he saw how many they were, he started yelling for help and they said to him: Be quiet; it will only take one blow and you will be relieved of this fear tonight. Abu Shurayh al-

[1] *Al-Tabâqât al-Kubra,* 3/350-355

[2] *al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Râshideen,* p. 218, 1219

Khuzâ'i was watching from above, and he shouted at them and they struck him and killed him. The people surrounded them and caught them, and among them were Zuhayr ibn Jundub al-Azdi, Muwarra' ibn Abi Muwarra' al-Asadi, Shubayl ibn Ubayy al-Azdi and others. Abu Shurayh and his son bore witness that they had entered upon (the victim), and they (the thieves) had ganged up together against the victim and some of them had killed him. He wrote to 'Uthmân about this and 'Uthmân wrote back, saying that they should be executed. So he executed them by the gate of the fort in al-Rahbah.

A man who killed a merchant for his money

That occurred during the caliphate of 'Uthmân, and the punishment was execution in retaliation *(qisâs)*.[1]

The punishment of a practitioner of witchcraft

It so happened during the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ that a slave woman of Hafsah's bewitched her, then the slave woman admitted that, so Hafsah ordered 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Zayd to kill her. 'Uthmân denounced her for that, and Ibn 'Umar said: Why are you upset with the Mother of the Believers when a woman bewitched her and admitted it? 'Uthmân remained silent. 'Uthmân did not criticize Hafsah for the killing, rather he criticized her for transgressing against the rights of the ruler to carry out *hadd* punishments, because the issue of *hadd* punishments is something that is in the ruler's hands. This is what is referred to in the words of Ibn 'Umar: Why are you upset with the Mother of the Believers when a woman bewitched her and admitted it? - i.e., the ruling is clear and the woman undoubtedly deserved to die.[2]

The offence committed by a blind man

The blind man with his guide is like a tool; he moves on his instructions and is unaware of what is going on around him; he

[1] *Asr al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 153

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 169, 170

moves and he may fall or be harmed by his movements. So he may harm others by his movements when he cannot see them. Hence if he causes any harm to his guide or his companion without meaning to, he is not liable for it. 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân said: Any man who sits with a blind man and the blind man harms him in some way, he is not liable for it.[1]

Injuries caused in a fight between two people

There may be an argument between some people, each of whom harms the other. If any such thing happens, then *qisâs* must take place, because this offence was deliberate, as it seems that each of them wanted to harm the other. 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân said: If two people fight, then any injuries caused between them are subject to *qisâs*.[2]

Harm caused to animals

If harm is caused to an animal, then its value must be paid. It was narrated that 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir said: During the caliphate of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, a man killed a hunting dog, the like of which was unknown among other dogs. Its value was estimated at eight hundred dirhams, so 'Uthmân made him pay that amount. And in another case he penalized a man twenty camels for the price of a dog that he had killed.[3]

Harm caused to an aggressor

If a person transgresses against the property of another man, or he threatens his life or honour and he kills him during that incident of aggression, then he is not liable. Ibn Hazm narrated in *al-Muhalla* that a man saw another man with his wife and killed him; they referred the matter to 'Uthmân and he ruled that no blood money was to be paid.[4]

---

[1] op. cit., p. 99

[2] op. cit., p. 100

[3] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân*, p. 102

[4] op. cit., p. 103

Asking the apostate to repent

The *hadd* punishment is not to be carried out on the apostate until he has been asked to repent three times. But if he persists in his apostasy, he is to be executed. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood caught some men in Kufah who had apostatized from Islam and were reviving the issue of Musaylimah the liar. He wrote to the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân about them, and 'Uthmân wrote back saying that they should be presented with the true religion and the testimony that there is no god but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh. Whoever accepted that and disavowed himself of Musaylimah was not to be executed, but whoever persisted in adhering to the religion of Musaylimah was to be executed. Some of them accepted it and were let go; others adhered to the religion of Musaylimah and were executed.[1]

"I have killed; will my repentance be accepted?"

A man said to 'Uthmân: O Ameer al-Mu'mineen, I have killed, will my repentance be accepted? 'Uthmân recited to him from the beginning of Soorat Ghâfir:

﴿حمٓ ○ تَنزِيلُ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْعَلِيمِ ○ غَافِرِ ٱلذَّنۢبِ وَقَابِلِ ٱلتَّوْبِ شَدِيدِ ٱلْعِقَابِ﴾

"Hâ. Meem. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings.] The revelation of the Book (this Qur'ân) is from Allâh, the All-Mighty, the All-Knower. The Forgiver of sin, the Acceptor of repentance, the Severe in punishment" (*Ghâfir* 40:1-3)

Then he said to him: Do good deeds and do not despair.[2] It is worth mentioning that when repenting from sins that affect other people, it is essential to restore their rights to them unless they give them up.[3]

---

[1] op. cit., p. 150

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 93

[3] ibid.

The hadd punishment for drinking alcohol

It is well known that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would punish a free man for drinking alcohol by giving him forty lashes, and the people would hit him with their shoes and the edges of their garments in order to humiliate him. Abu Bakr did likewise, as did 'Umar at the beginning of his reign, but he soon increased the punishment to eighty lashes, in consultation with the Sahâbah, when he saw that the people were not taking the punishment seriously and were not deterred by it. With regard to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, it is proven that he gave a free man forty lashes and it is proven that he gave him eighty lashes. This is not due to his whims and desires, rather he distinguished between one drinker and another. He did not punish the one who had made a mistake and drunk alcohol once as he punished the one who was addicted to it. For the person who had drunk for the first time and made a mistake, the punishment was forty lashes, and for the one who drank repeatedly and was addicted to it, the punishment was eighty lashes. It is as if the first forty lashes was the minimum, and the other forty was an additional punishment.

Carrying out the *hadd* punishment on his uterine brother al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah

It was narrated that Husayn ibn al-Mundhir said: I was present with 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân when al-Waleed was brought and two men - one of whom was Hamrân - testified that he had drunk wine, and another testified that he had seen him vomiting. 'Uthmân said: He would not have vomited unless he drank it. He said: O 'Ali, get up and flog him. 'Ali said: Get up, O Hasan, and flog him. Al-Hasan said: Let the one who is in authority carry out the punishment.[1] It is as if he was upset with him. He said: O 'Abd-Allâh ibn Ja'far, get up and flog him. So he flogged him and 'Ali counted until he reached forty, then he said: Stop. He said: The Prophet ﷺ gave forty lashes, and Abu Bakr gave forty, and 'Umar gave eighty; both are Sunnah but this is dearer to me.[2]

---

[1] *Sharh al-Nawawi 'ala Saheeh Muslim, Kitâb al-Hudood,* 11/216

[2] *Wilâyat al-Shurtah fi'l-Islam,* by Dr. Nimr al-Humaydâni, p. 105

From this *hadeeth* it may be understood that the predecessors of 'Uthmân (ﷺ) implemented this *hadd* punishment, and that the one who is commanded to carry out the *hadd* punishment may delegate it to someone else. It may also be understood that 'Uthmân was strict in adhering to the truth and that he did not worry about the blame of others when it came to implementing the laws of Allâh. Al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet was his brother on his mother's side.[1]

Theft by a minor

The hadd punishment for stealing is only to be carried out if the thief is an adult of sound mind who did it by choice, knowing that it is harâm. A boy who had stolen was brought to 'Uthmân, and he said: Look at his private parts. So they looked, but the pubic hair had not yet appeared, so he did not amputate his hand.[2]

Imprisonment as a *Ta'zeer* punishment

Dâbi ibn al-Hârith al-Burjami borrowed a dog called Qarhân from some of the Ansâr at the time of al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, to go hunting gazelles, then he refused to give it back. The Ansâris disputed with him and sought the help of his people against him, and they outnumbered him. They took the dog from him and returned it to the Ansâr, then he attacked them and composed poetry in which he slandered them and said that this dog was their mother. They complained about him to 'Uthmân, who sent for him and punished him by imprisoning him as he used to do with other Muslims; he found life in prison very hard and he remained in prison until he died there.[3]

Slandering people's honour indirectly

'Uthmân used to carry out the hadd punishment for slandering people's honour even if that was done indirectly. One man said to another, O son of... - hinting that his mother was

---

[1] op. cit., p. 104

[2] *Saheeh al-Tawtheeq*, p. 77; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân*, p. 171

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/420

an adulteress. He complained about that to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, and the man said: I only meant such and such. But 'Uthmân ordered that he be flogged as the *hadd* punishment for slander and he did not pay any attention to what he said he meant.[1]

The punishment for *zina*

If it is proven that a man or woman has committed zina, and he or she is free and married, the punishment is stoning to death. A married woman committed zina at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, and he had her stoned but he did not attend the stoning.[2]

Exile as a *ta'zeer* punishment

'Uthmân heard that Ibn al-Habkah al-Nahdi was engaging in a kind of witchcraft, so he sent word to al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah telling him to question him about that and, if he admitted it, to punish him severely. So he summoned him and questioned him, and he said: It is just something kind and wonderful. So he ordered that he be punished and he told the people about him and he read 'Uthmân's letter to them, in which 'Uthmân told them to focus on serious matters and keep away from time-wasters. So people turned against him and they were surprised that 'Uthmân knew about him. The man got angry, and he and some others acted in a defiant manner, so (al-Waleed) wrote to 'Uthmân concerning him, and when he exiled these people to Syria, he exiled Ka'b ibn Dhi'l-Habkah and Mâlik ibn 'Abd-Allâh to Deenyawand.

Keeping the people away from the funeral of al-'Abbâs

It was narrated that 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Yazeed said: When the bier of al-'Abbâs ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib was brought to the place where biers were brought, the people crowded around and took him to al-Baqee'. I remember when we offered the funeral prayer for him in al-Baqee', and I never saw so many people come out for anyone. No one could get near his bier, and Banu Hâshim

[1] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 247

[2] Op. cit., p. 164

were pushing people away from him. When they reached the grave, the people were crowding around. I saw 'Uthmân leaving, and he sent the police to push people away from Banu Hâshim, until Banu Hâshim were able to come forward, and they were the ones who lowered him into the grave.[1]

This indicates that there were numerous policemen at that time, and 'Uthmân is regarded by some historians[2] as the first caliph to establish a police force. He gave this mission in Madînah to the great Sahâbi al-Muhâjir ibn Qunfudh ibn 'Umayr al-Qurashi.[3] This indicates that he cared about this issue and that it was well known at his time. In Kufah, 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Asadi was in charge of the police of Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas ('Uthmân's governor in Kufah), and Naseer ibn 'Abd al-Rahmân was in charge of the police of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân ('Uthmân's governor in Syria).[4]

In fact we do not know of any caliph after Abu Bakr and 'Umar (ﷺ) who did not carry out *hadd* punishments on both relatives and non-relatives, noble and ignoble, rich and poor, without caring who the person was, as 'Uthmân did, and it is sufficient honour for him that he is counted as one of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.[5]

Acts of worship and transactions between people

'Uthmân offered the prayers in full at Mina and 'Arafât

In Hajj of 29 AH 'Uthmân led the people in prayer in Mina and prayed four rak'ahs. Someone went to 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf and said: Do you know what your brother did? He led the people in four rak'ahs. So 'Abd ar-Rahmân led his companions in praying two rak'ahs, then he went and entered upon 'Uthmân,

---

[1] *at-Tabaqât*, 4/32
[2] *Tareekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, p. 179
[3] *Wilâyat al-Shurtah fi'l-Islam*, p. 105
[4] op. cit., p. 106
[5] *Tahqeeq Muwâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*, 1/409

and said to him: Didn't you pray two rak'ahs in this place with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ? He said: Yes. He said: Didn't you pray two rak'ahs with Abu Bakr? He said: Yes. He said: Didn't you pray two rak'ahs with 'Umar? He said: Yes. He said: Did you not pray two rak'ahs at the beginning of your caliphate? He said: Yes. 'Uthmân said: Listen to me, O Abu Muhammad[1] , I was told that some of the people of Yemen and some rough people who came for Hajj said last year: the prayer for the resident is two rak'ahs, because your leader 'Uthmân prays two rak'ahs, and I had taken a wife in Makkah. So I decided to pray four rak'ahs because I was worried about the people and because I had taken a wife here, and I have property in al-Tâ'if. Perhaps I will go there after I finish and stay there. 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said: None of that is an excuse for you. As for your saying that you have taken a wife, your wife is in Madînah and you could travel with her if you wanted to and bring her here if you wanted to, because she stays wherever you stay. As for your saying that you have property in al-Tâ'if, there is three days travel between you and al-Tâ'if, and you are not one of the people of al-Tâ'if. As for your saying that the people of Yemen who did *Hajj* and others will go back saying that the ruler 'Uthmân prays two rak'ahs and he is a resident, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ received the Revelation and Muslims were few at that time, and the same was true at the time of Abu Bakr and 'Uthmân. Now Islam has become well established, and 'Umar led them in praying two *rak'ahs* until he died. 'Uthmân said: This is my opinion. 'Abd al-Rahmân went out and met Ibn Mas'ood. He said: O Abu Muhammad, have you come to some agreement? He said: No. He said: What should I do? He said: Do what you know. Ibn Mas'ood said: Differing is evil. I heard that he prayed with four rak'ahs so I led my companions in praying four. 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Awf said: I heard that he prayed with four rak'ahs but I led my companions in praying two. But now I shall do as you suggest (i.e., praying four rak'ahs with him).[2]

---

[1] Abu Muhammad is the *kunyah* of 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Awf.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/268

'Uthmân did what he did, offering the prayer in full in Mina and 'Arafât, out of compassion towards the weak Muslims, lest they become confused about religious matters. He gave a reasonable explanation for his action when 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf asked him about it and what prompted him to do that. When 'Uthmân told him of his view, 'Abd ar-Rahmân accepted it and offered the prayer in full with his companions, as did 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood and the majority of the Sahâbah. They followed him and did not differ from him, because he was a wise ruler who was to be followed so long as he did not transgress the limits of sharee'ah. If there had been any question that 'Uthmân was going against a shar'i text, then the majority of the Sahâbah could never have followed him.[1]

So 'Uthmân was worried that the people may become confused about the prayer, especially the rough Bedouins from the desert, and those who lived far away in remote regions who did not have scholars to guide and teach them. 'Uthmân wanted, by means of his action, to put an end to this confusion that was felt by many of the weaker Muslims. He went to great lengths to avoid any suspicion about himself, so he said that he had taken a wife in Makkah, and that he had property in al-Tâ'if, and he would perhaps go and stay there after the Hajj season ended. So at that time he was a resident whose prayers should be offered in full. This is indicative of his precise understanding and wisdom.[2]

Some of the Sahâbah were of the view that the prayer should be offered in full when travelling, such as 'Aa'ishah, 'Uthmân, Salmân and fourteen other companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.[3] 'Uthmân did not regard it as obligatory to shorten prayers when travelling, rather he regarded it as permissible, which is the view of the fuqaha' of Madînah, Mâlik, al-Shâfi'i and others. Moreover, it is a matter that is subject to *ijtihâd*, which is why the

---

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 192

[2] op. cit., p. 194

[3] *Kitâb al-Imâmah wa'l-Radd 'ala al-Râfidah* by al-Asbahâni, p. 312

scholars differed concerning it. His view does not amount to *kufr* or *fisq*.[1]

As for the view of Ibn Mas'ood, that differing is evil[2] (and in one report he said: I hate differences[3] , this is a lesson and a reminder for us that it is better to find a way out of differences in matters that are subject to *ijtihâd*. It is better for a Muslim to try to avoid controversial matters and not argue about minor issues concerning which there are differences of opinion.[4] Our circumstances do not allow us to waste precious time in arguing and disputing. Rather we should devote our time to dealing with the serious challenges that face us.[5] The action of Ibn Mas'ood and Ibn 'Awf in praying behind 'Uthmân also highlights the Sahâbah's keenness for unity, which is one of the great attributes of that generation which attained victory.

Adding a second *adhân* on Friday

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي»

"You should adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs who come after me."[6]

The addition of the second adhân is the part of the way of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and undoubtedly 'Uthmân was one of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. He saw a purpose in adding a second *adhân*, which was to alert the people that the time of *Jumu'ah* prayer was approaching, after the city of Madînah had expanded in size. Al-Hâfiz was of the view that it was an announcement that the time has begun. He said in *Fath al-Bâri*: It seems that 'Uthmân

---

[1] *al-Riyâdh al-Nadrah*, p. 566

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/268

[3] *al-Qawâ'id al-Fiqhiyyah li'l-Nadwi*, p. 336

[4] *Fiqh al-Awwaliyyat* by Muhammad al-Wakeeli, p. 169

[5] *al-Fikr al-Islami bayna al-Mathâliyyah wa'l-Tatbeeq* by Kâmil al-Shareef, p. 29

[6] *Sunan Abi Dawood, Kitâb al-Sunnah*, no. 4607; *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Kitâb al-'Ilm*, p. 2676

introduced it so that the people would know that the time had begun, by analogy with other prayers, so he made *Jumu'ah* like other prayers, and he kept the distinct feature of Jumu'ah which is giving the adhân when the khateeb ascends the minbar. But as for that which people have introduced before the time of *Jumu'ah* of reciting *du'â's, dhikr* and blessings on the Prophet ﷺ over loudspeakers, which happens in some countries but not others, following the way of the righteous salaf is preferable.[1]

As for those who say that it was introduced just before the time for Jumu'ah begins, they said: That is because the purpose was to announce Jumu'ah and make the people rush to prayer, so it was the same purpose as the first *adhân* of Fajr, and if it came after the time began, it would not achieve that purpose unless *Jumu'ah* was delayed somewhat, which is contrary to the Sunnah. Thus, with the adhân before the time begins, there is no need for the recitation of *dhikr* etc. which al-Hafiz referred to when he said "following the way of the righteous salaf is preferable."[2]

Doing *ghusl* every day since he became Muslim

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân did *ghusl* every day since he became Muslim.[3] One day he led the people in praying Fajr when he was *junub,* without realizing. In the morning he saw traces of semen on his garment. He said: I am getting old, by Allâh; I was *junub* and did not realize it. Then he repeated the prayer[4] , but those who had prayed behind him did not repeat it.[5]

Sujood al-Tilâwah (prostration when reading Qur'ân)

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was of the view that sujood al-tilâwah was obligatory when reciting Qur'ân and when sitting and

---

[1] *Fath al-Bâri,* 4/345

[2] *as-Sunnah wa'l-Bid'ah,* by 'Abd-Allâh Ba'lawi al-Hadrami, p. 132, 133

[3] *Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah,* no. 756. Its isnâd is hasan

[4] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 190

[5] op. cit., p. 192

listening to Qur'ân. As for one who hears it without meaning to, he does not have to prostrate. 'Umar passed by a storyteller who recited a verse in which a prostration was required so that 'Uthmân would prostrate with him. 'Uthmân said: The prostration is only required of the one is listening to it, then he went on his way and did not prostrate.[1] His words "the one who is listening to it" mean the one who intended to listen to it. And he said: The prostration is only required of the one who sits (to listen to it).[2] And it was narrated from 'Uthmân that the menstruating woman who hears a verse of prostration should make a gesture and not ignore it, but she should not prostrate as in prayer.[3]

Praying *Jumu'ah* in the coastal regions

Al-Layth ibn Sa'd said: Every city or town in which there is a congregation *(jamâ'ah)* is enjoined to pray Jumu'ah. The people of a region and its coast would come together to pray Jumu'ah at the time of 'Umar and 'Uthmân on their command, and there were some of the *Sahâbah* among them.[4]

'Uthmân rested during the *khutbah*

It was narrated from Qatâdah that the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân used to deliver the *khutbah* on Friday until it became hard for 'Uthmân to stand, so he used to deliver the *khutbah* standing and then sit. When Mu'âwiyah was the caliph, he would deliver the first khutbah sitting and the second *khutbah* standing.[5]

Reciting *Qunoot* before bowing

Anas said: The first one who put *Qunoot* before bowing - i.e.,

---

[1] *al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah wa'l-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah,* by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya, p. 444

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 168

[3] ibid.

[4] *Fath al-Bâri,* 2/441

[5] *al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* by Yahya al-Yahya, p. 444

as a regular practice - was 'Uthmân, so that the people could catch up with the rak'ah.[1]

The most knowledgeable of people on the rulings of *Hajj*

Muhammad ibn Sireen said: They used to think that the most knowledgeable of people with regard to the rituals of *Hajj* were 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, then 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar (ﷺ).[2]

Prohibition on entering *ihrâm* before reaching the *miqât*

When 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir conquered Khorasan, he said: This is a victory from Allâh and I must give thanks to Him; I shall show my gratitude to Allâh by leaving this place - Khorasan - in *ihrâm*. So he entered *ihrâm* from Nishapur and left al-Ahnaf ibn Qays in charge of Khorasan. When he had completed his 'umrah, he came to 'Uthmân, and that was in the year in which he was killed. 'Uthmân said to him: You spoiled your 'umrah when you entered *ihrâm* from Nishapur.[3]

Woman in *'iddah* travelling for *Hajj* and *'Umrah*

It is well known that a woman who is observing *'iddah* should not stay overnight anywhere but in her own house, and she should not travel until after her *'iddah* has ended, because travelling will mean that she will stay overnight outside her house. Travel is inevitable in the case of *Hajj*, hence 'Uthmân was of the view that a woman in *'iddah* is not obliged to do *Hajj* so long as she is in 'iddah, and he would send back from al-Juhfah or Dhu'l-Hulayfah any woman in *'iddah* who was going for *Hajj* or *'Umrah*.[4]

Ban on Hajj *Tamattu'*

'Uthmân banned Hajj *Tamattu'* and *Qirân* so that people would do that which is better, not so as to abolish them. It was

[1] op. cit., p. 444; *Fath al-Bâri*, 2/569

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*. p. 112

[3] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 5/31; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 17

[4] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 112

well known to 'Uthmân and others that the one who enters *ihrâm* has the choice between *Ifrâd, Qirân* and *Tamattu'*, but he thought that *Ifrâd* was better than the two other options. It was narrated that Marwân ibn al-Hakam said: I saw 'Uthmân and 'Ali (ﷺ) when 'Uthmân banned *Tamattu'* and *Qirân*. When 'Ali saw that, he entered *ihrâm* for both and said: *Labbayka bi 'umratin wa hajjatin* (Here I am (O Allâh), for *'Umrah* and *Hajj*). And he said: I would not give up the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ for the opinion of anyone.[1] . 'Uthmân did not object to 'Ali doing that, because 'Ali was afraid that others might interpret the ban as an abolition and prohibition. Rather he said: I would never give up the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ for the opinion of anyone, to make it clear that it is permissible and that it is Sunnah for all time. Each of them was a mujtahid who will be rewarded.[2]

From this story we learn, among other things, that scholars of authority may debate for the purpose of spreading knowledge and advising the Muslims; people in authority were open-minded and listened to the scholar's views on various issues in which there is room for *ijtihâd;* and the *mujtahid* cannot force another *mujtahid* to follow him, because 'Uthmân kept quiet about 'Ali's action. It also shows that one should have knowledge before speaking or acting.[3]

Eating game meat

It is not permissible for the pilgrim in *ihrâm* to eat game meat that he has caught himself, or that was caught for him by someone outside the sanctuary.[4] It was narrated from 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Hâtib that he did 'Umrah with 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and a group of people. When he was in al-Rawha' he brought them the meat of a bird and 'Uthmân said to them, Eat, but he did not want to eat any of it himself. 'Amr ibn al-'Aas said: Should we eat of

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Hajj,* no. 1563

[2] *Shaheed al-Dâr 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 86

[3] ibid.

[4] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 20

something that you are not eating? 'Uthmân said: With regard to this meat, I am not like you, because it was caught for me and killed for my sake.[1] And this happened to 'Uthmân on another occasion, as 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Rabee'ah said: I saw 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân in al-'Urj when he was in *ihrâm* on a summer's day and had covered his head with a piece of red cloth. Some game meat was brought to him and he said to his companions: Eat. They said: Why don't you eat too? He said: I am not like you; it was caught for my sake.[2]

Dislike of marriage between close relatives

Al-Khallâl narrated via Ishâq ibn 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi Talhah, from his father, that Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân disliked marriage between close relatives for fear of creating hatred.[3]

Breastfeeding

'Abd al-Razzâq narrated from Ibn Jurayj that Ibn Shihâb said: 'Uthmân separated people who had got married on the basis of a statement from a black woman who had breastfed both of them.[4]

Khula

It was narrated that al-Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidh said: There was an argument between me and my paternal cousin - who was her husband - and I said to him: You can have everything (in return for separation), and he said: I agree. I said: By Allâh, he has taken everything, even my mattress. I went to 'Uthmân when he was besieged and he said: Your condition gave him the authority to take everything, even your headband.[5] According to another report: I separated from my husband by *khula'* in return for everything except my headband, and 'Uthmân allowed that.[6]

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 5/191; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 20

[3] *al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, by Dr. Yahya al-Yahya, p. 449

[4] *al-Fath*, 5/18

[5] *al-Tabaqât*, 8/448

[6] *al-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, by Yahya al-Yahya, p. 449

A woman whose husband dies must observe the mourning period

Part of (the widow's) mourning is not wearing adornments and not staying overnight anywhere except the house in which her husband died, except in cases of necessity. It is permissible for her to go out during the day for necessary purposes, but she should not stay overnight except in her own house.[1] It was narrated from Furay'ah bint Mâlik ibn Sinân, the sister of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri, that she came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and told him that her husband had gone out in pursuit of some slaves of his, and they killed him in Taraf al-Qudoom. She asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: Let me go back to my family, because my husband did not leave me in a house that he owned and did not leave any provisions. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: Yes. She said: I turned to leave, then when I was in the next room, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ called me back or ordered that I be called back, and he said: What did you say? I repeated the story that I had told him about my husband, and he said: Stay in your house until the term prescribed is fulfilled (i.e., until your *'iddah* is over). She said: So I observed *'iddah* there for four months and ten days. She said: When 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was caliph he sent for me and asked me about that, and I told him, and he ruled according to that.[2] Hence 'Uthmân was very strict concerning the issue of a woman in *'iddah* going out of her house. It so happened that a woman whose husband had died visited her family during her *'iddah*, and her labour pains began. They asked 'Uthmân about that and he said: Take her back to her home, when she was in labour.[3]

Do not marry her unless you are serious about it

A man came to 'Uthmân during his caliphate when he was riding and said to him: I need to ask you something, O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. 'Uthmân said: I am in a hurry right now, but if you

[1] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 244

[2] op. cit., p. 224; *al-Muwatta'*, 2/591

[3] op. cit., p. 224

wish you may ride behind me so that you can tell me what you want. So he rode behind him and said: I have a neighbour who divorced his wife in a moment of anger, and he is very upset. I want to seek reward by marrying her and consummating the marriage with her, then divorcing her so that she can go back to her first husband. 'Uthmân said to him: Do not marry her unless you are serious about it.[1]

Divorce issued by a drunkard

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was of the view that nothing said by a drunkard counts, so his contract, annulment, approval and divorce do not count as such, because he is not aware of what he is saying, and there is no commitment when there is no control.[2] 'Uthmân said: There is no divorce on the part of one who is drunk or insane.[3]

Father's gift to his son

If a father gives his son a gift, he must bring witnesses to this gift. If he brings witnesses, it is as if he has already given it, but it is valid to keep it in the possession of the father. It was narrated that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ said: Whoever gives a gift to his minor son and brings witnesses to that, it is binding even if it remains under the father's control.[4] But if he does not bring witnesses and does not hand it over to the son, then it is a gift that is not binding. 'Uthmân said: What is the matter with people, one of whom gives a gift to his son, then if the son dies he says: It is my property and is in my possession. But if he (the father) dies, he says: I gave it to him? Nothing is proven to have been given as a gift except that which is in the son's possession of his father's wealth.[5]

---

[1] op. cit., p. 81

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 53; al-Fatâwa, 14/72

[3] *al-Fatâwa*, 33/61; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p., p. 53

[4] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 6/170; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p., p. 288

[5] *al-Fatâwa*, 31/154

Not letting a fool dispose of his wealth

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was of the view that a fool (one who is feeble-minded) should not be allowed to dispose of his own wealth. It so happened that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Ja'far bought some land for sixty thousand dinars, news of which reached 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib. He decided that the land was not worth this much money, and that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Ja'far had been cheated badly, and that he had engaged in a foolish transaction. He said that he was going to go to the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ and ask him to put a ban on 'Abd-Allâh ibn Ja'far from disposing of his wealth, because of his foolishness and bad handling of his wealth. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Ja'far ran to az-Zubayr - who was a smart businessman - and said to him: I bought something for such an amount, and 'Ali wants to go to 'Uthmân and ask him to impose a ban on me. Az-Zubayr said to him: I will be your partner in this venture. 'Ali went to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and told him: My brother's son bought some barren land for sixty thousand that I wouldn't even buy with my shoes; impose a ban on him. Az-Zubayr said to 'Uthmân: I am his partner in this venture. 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân said to 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib: How can I impose a ban on a man whose business partner is az-Zubayr?[1] i.e., we cannot rule that Ja'far was foolish when his partner is az-Zubayr, because az-Zubayr could not be a partner in a foolish transaction.[2]

Imposing a ban on one who is bankrupt

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was of the view that a ban should imposed on one who is bankrupt, and that if a ban was imposed on one who is bankrupt, his creditors would share out his property according to what was owed to them. But if one of the creditors found his own goods that he had sold to him, it was permissible for him to annul his transaction and take back his goods.[3] So he had more right to those goods than anyone else.[4]

---

[1] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 6/661; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p., p. 119

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p., p. 119

[3] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 6/46

[4] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p., p. 119

Prohibition on hoarding

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ forbade hoarding and did not allow it.[1] It seems that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, like his predecessor 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, did not differentiate between hoarding of food and other things, because his prohibition on hoarding was general, especially since the reports that were narrated from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ concerning the prohibition included some that were general in meaning and included the hoarding of anything, no matter what it is, and some that define the things that are not to be hoarded. But according to the majority of scholars, what is general in meaning is to be accepted as it is.[2]

Lost camels

Mâlik narrated that he heard Ibn Shihâb say: At the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, lost camels would be let go and no one would touch them. But at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, he ordered that it should be announced (as lost property) and then they should be sold, then if the owner came along, he was to be given the price of the camel.[3] 'Umar's action was in accordance with the hadeeth narrated in *al-Saheehayn* from Zayd ibn Khâlid al-Juhani ﷺ who said: A Bedouin came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him about what he found (of lost property). He said:

«اعْرِفْ عِفاصَها وَوِكاءَها، ثُمَّ عَرِّفْها سَنَةً، فإنْ جاءَ صَاحِبُها وإلَّا شَأنَكَ بِهَا. قالَ: فَضَالَّةُ الغَنَمِ؟ قالَ: هِيَ لكَ أوْ لِأَخِيكَ أوْ للذِّئْبِ. قالَ: فَضَالَّةُ الإِبْلِ؟ قالَ: مَا لَكَ ولَها؟ مَعَها سِقاؤُها وحِذاؤُها، تَرِدُ المَاءَ وتَأكُلُ الشَّجَرَ حتَّى يَلْقَاهَا رَبُّها»

"Memorize the features of its bag and strap, and announce it for a year. Then if its owner comes (give it to him), otherwise it is

[1] *Muwatta' Mâlik*, 2/651

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, p. 15

[3] *Muwatta' Mâlik*, p. 648, 649, Dar al-Afâq al-Jadeedah edition

yours." He said: What about a lost sheep, O Messenger of Allâh? He said: "It is either for you or your brother or for the wolf." He said: What about a lost camel? He said: "What have you to do with it? It has its water supply and its feet, and it can come to the water and eat from the trees, until its master finds it."[1]

Professor al-Hajawi was of the view that this *ijtihâd* on 'Uthmân's part was based on *al-maslahah al-mursalah* (the public interest), as he saw the people taking these lost camels. So he appointed a herdsman to collect them, then they were to be sold in the public interest.[2] Professor 'Abd al-Salâm al-Sulaymâni, on the other hand, responded to this by saying: It is difficult to accept the view of Professor al-Hajawi, because matters of public interest are issues concerning which there is no clear text of sharee'ah whereas the Prophet ﷺ issued a ruling on lost camels in the hadeeth quoted above, so in this case the public interest is what was stated by the Prophet ﷺ himself. So it is not valid to say that what 'Uthmân did, selling these lost camels, comes under the heading of *al-maslahah al-mursalah.* The principle of al-maslahah al-mursalah does not apply when there is a text.

It seems to us that 'Uthmân's ijtihâd with regard to this issue served a public interest but it was not a case of *maslahah mursalah*, and that this was an issue that is subject to ijtihâd concerning which the ruling may change according to time and circumstance. The ijtihâd of 'Uthmân was based on the interests of the owners of the lost camels, because the reason for the ruling, as it appears to be, is to protect these camels, either physically or with regard to their price. In either case there is an interest to be served. Undoubtedly 'Uthmân's aim in this case was to serve the public interest, because he thought that leaving these camels as they were - as was the case at the time of the Prophet ﷺ until the time of 'Umar - would expose them to loss, after the people's attitude

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Laqatah,* no. 2427, 2428, 2429.

[2] *Al-Fikr al-Sâmi,* 1/245

changed and they started to take the lost camels. He thought that his action would stop them doing that, and this is undoubtedly a sound ijtihâd and sound ruling.[1]

Allowing a woman who was divorced during her husband's final illness to inherit

'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Awf divorced his wife when he was sick, but 'Uthmân allowed her to inherit from him after her *'iddah* ended. It was narrated that Shurayh wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb about a man who divorced his wife three times when he was sick, and 'Umar replied: Let her inherit from him so long as she was still in *'iddah* when he died, but if her *'iddah* had ended, then she cannot inherit. After they agreed that a divorce issued by a sick man in his final illness does not alter the fact that she is still his wife and may inherit from him, 'Umar set a limit for that, which was the *'iddah,* whereas 'Uthmân did not set a limit and said: She inherits from the one who divorced her whether he died during the *'iddah* or afterwards. There is no text to refer to with regard to this issue, and the reason for the ruling was to do the opposite of what the husband intended, because by divorcing her in his final illness, he wanted to deprive his wife of her inheritance.[2]

Allowing a divorced woman to inherit so long as the *'iddah* had not yet ended

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân said: If one of the spouses dies before the third menstrual cycle of the divorced woman, then the one who is still alive inherits from the one who dies.[3] There is no reason why they should not inherit from one another if that is still within the *'iddah* period, such as if the woman had one or two menstrual periods, then she stopped menstruating. Habbân ibn Munqidh divorced his wife when he was healthy, and she was

[1] *al-Ijtihâd fi'l-Fiqh al-Islami,* p. 143, 144

[2] *Tareekh al-Tashree' al-Islami* by al-Hadari, p. 118; *Nash'at al-Fiqh al-Ijtihâdi* by Muhammad al-Sâyis, p. 27; *al-Ijtihâd fi'l-Fiqh al-Islami,* p. 142

[3] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* p. 28

breastfeeding his daughter, and she remained for seventeen months without menstruating, because breastfeeding stopped her menses. Habbân fell sick seven or eight months after he had divorced her, and it was said to him: Your wife will inherit from you. He said: Take me to 'Uthmân. So they took him to him, and he told him about his wife. 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib and Zayd ibn Thâbit were present, and 'Uthmân said to them: What do you think? They said: We think that she should inherit from him if he dies, and he should inherit from her if she dies, because she is not one of the

﴿وَٱلْقَوَٰعِدُ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ٱلَّٰتِى لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا﴾

"*Women past childbearing who do not expect wedlock*" (cf. *An-Noor* 24:60),

and she is not a virgin who has no menses yet, so the *'iddah* is still to be counted by her menstrual cycles whether they are short or long. Habbân went back to his wife and took his daughter away, and when the breastfeeding stopped, she (his wife) got her menses, then she got her menses again, then Habbân died before she got her third menses, so she observed the *'iddah* of the widow, and inherited from her husband Habbân ibn Munqidh.[1]

Inheritance of a foundling

A *kâfir* woman was taken prisoner, and in her arms was a child whom she claimed was her son. This is what is called a foundling and her claim is not to be believed and they cannot inherit from one another unless proof is established that he is her son. 'Uthmân consulted the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about that, and each of them gave his opinion. Then 'Uthmân said: In that case we do not think that we should allow the wealth of Allâh to be inherited except with proof. And he said: The foundling cannot inherit except with proof.[2]

---

[1] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi* (7/419); *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthmân ibn'Affân*, p. 29

[2] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Uthaman ibn 'Affân*, p. 28

These are some of the examples of the *ijtihâd* of 'Uthmân which had an impact on the judiciary in the areas of *qisâs, hudood* punishments, offences, and disciplinary punishments *(ta'zeer)*. 'Uthmân also played a role in the development of the schools of Islamic fiqh through his *ijtihâd* which was indicative of the vastness of his knowledge and the depth of his understanding of the noble aims of sharee'ah. He was a Rightly-Guided Caliph, and his actions are to be taken as guidance for the ummah in its efforts to support the religion of Allâh ﷻ.



Chapter 4

Conquests at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ

Introduction

News of the murder of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ encouraged the enemies of Islam, especially in Persia and Byzantium, to hope that they would be able to take back their lands and regain their power, so Yazdagird the king of Persia began making his plans in the capital where he was ensconced, which was Farghanah the capital of Samarqand. As for the Byzantine leaders, they had left Syria and moved to Constantinople, the capital of Byzantium. At the time of 'Uthmân they started to look for means that would enable them to take back their land. The remainder of the Byzantine army in Egypt was besieged in Alexandria at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb. 'Amr ibn al-'Aas asked him for permission to conquer it, and it was surrounded by a great deal of fortifications with catapults atop their walls. Heraclius resolved to lead the fighting himself, and ruled that no one should stay behind and not fight, because Alexandria was their last stronghold.[1] At the time of 'Uthmân, the Byzantines

[1] *Al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Râshidoon*, p. 221

assembled in Alexandria and started to look for means to take back their lands, to such an extent that they decided to break the treaty and seek help from the Byzantine navy.[1] So they supplied them with three hundred ships carrying men and weapons. 'Uthmân faced all that with a strategy that was based on decisiveness and resolve, and included the following steps:

1- Subjugating the rebels, both Persian and Byzantine, and restoring Islamic rule in those lands.

2- Ongoing jihad and conquests in areas beyond those lands, to cut off their supply lines.

3- Establishing bases and outposts so that the Muslims could guard the lands of Islam.

4- Establishing a navy because the Muslim army needed its support.[2]

At the time of 'Uthmân, the army camps and barracks were the capitals of the major regions. So the camps of Iraq were Kufah and Basra; the camp of Syria was in Damascus after all of Syria came under the control of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân; the camp of Egypt was centred in al-Fustât. All of these camps were established to protect the Islamic state and to ensure the continued progress of the conquests and the spread of Islam.[3]



[1] Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen, p. 324

[2] *Al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Râshidoon*, p. 222

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 199, 200

'Uthmân's conquests in the East

Conquests of the people of Kufah: Azerbaijan, 24 AH

The outposts of the people of Kufah were al-Rayy and Azerbaijan, where ten thousand fighters were stationed, six thousand in Azerbaijan and four thousand in al-Rayy. The standing army of Kufah was forty thousand strong; every year ten thousand of them would go out to fight, so each man would go to war once every four years. When 'Uthmân appointed al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah as governor of Kufah, the people of Azerbaijan broke the treaty and refused to continue adhering to the conditions they had agreed to with Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamân at the time of 'Umar, and they rebelled against their governor 'Uqbah ibn Farqad. 'Uthmân ordered al-Waleed to attack them, so he sent against them his commander Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili as an advance force at the head of a number of troops, then al-Waleed set out after him with some of the people. The people of Azerbaijan hastened to come to him, seeking a peace treaty on the same terms as they had agreed to with Hudhayfah, and al-Waleed agreed and accepted their submission. Then he sent dispatches to the surrounding areas and launched attacks. He sent 'Abd-Allâh ibn Shabeel al-Ahmasi with four thousand troops to the people of

Mawqân and al-Babar al-Taylasân, where he seized some of their wealth as booty and captured some prisoners, but they managed to get away from him and he could not catch them. Then he sent Salmân al-Bâhili with twelve thousand troops to Armenia, which he subjugated and returned from it with his hands full of booty. After that, al-Waleed departed and returned to Kufah.[1]

But the people of Azerbaijan rebelled more than once. Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, the governor of Azerbaijan, wrote to al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah and he sent reinforcements from Kufah; al-Ash'ath pursued the rebels and inflicted a decisive defeat on them, so they asked for a peace treaty and he agreed to the same terms as in their first treaty. But al-Ash'ath was afraid that they would rebel again, so he stationed a guard of Arab troops and gave them a stipend that was registered in the diwân, and he told them to call the people to Islam. When Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas became their governor, the people of Azerbaijan once again rebelled against their new governor, so he sent Jareer ibn 'Abd-Allâh al-Bajali to him and he defeated them and killed their leader. Then things settled down after most of the people became Muslim and learned the Holy Qur'ân.

As for al-Rayy, the command of the caliph 'Uthmân went out to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari when he was the governor of Kufah, telling him to send the army there because it had rebelled. So he sent Qurayzah ibn Ka'b al-Ansâri there to conquer it again.[2]

Participation of the people of Kufah in sabotaging Byzantine movements

When al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah finished his mission in Azerbaijan and returned to Mosul, there came to him the command of the caliph 'Uthmân, which read as follows:

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân has written to me, telling me that the Byzantines have brought a huge army against the Muslims. I

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/246

[2] *al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Râshidoon*, p. 224

think that their brothers from Kufah should go and support them. When this letter of mine reaches you, send a man of those whom you think are chivalrous, brave and pious, with eight thousand or nine thousand or ten thousand troops from the place where you get this letter. Wa'l-salâm.[1]

Al-Waleed stood before the people and praised and glorified Allâh, then he said: O people, Allâh has granted victory to the Muslims in this direction (the east) and has enabled them to recapture land whose inhabitants rebelled and to conquer new land, and He brought them back safe and sound, with booty and reward. Praise be to Allâh, the Lord of the Worlds. Now the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* has written to me, commanding me to send between eight and ten thousand of you to support your brothers in Syria, for the Byzantines have assembled (an army) against them. In that there will be a great reward and immense virtue. So join up, may Allâh have mercy on you, with Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili.

So the people joined up, and before three days had passed, eight thousand men from Kufah set out, and marched until they and the people of Syria entered the land of the Byzantines. The Syrian army was led by Habeeb ibn Maslamah ibn Khâlid al-Fihri, and the army of Kufah was led by Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili. They raided the Byzantine lands, taking whatever prisoners and booty they wanted, and they conquered many strongholds there.[2] Of the jihad and campaign of al-Waleed one narrator said: I saw al-Sha'bi sitting with Muhammad ibn 'Amr ibn al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, and Muhammad mentioned the campaign of Maslamah ibn 'Abd al-Malik. Al-Sha'bi said: What if you had seen al-Waleed and his campaign when he was governor? When he went out on campaign he would reach such and such a place and would not fall short, and no one rebelled against him until he was dismissed from his post.[3]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/247

[2] ibid.

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 201

The campaign of Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas to Tabaristan in 30 AH

Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas set out on campaign from Kufah in 30 AH, heading for Khorasan, accompanied by Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamân and some of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ; with him were al-Hasan and al-Husayn, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Abbâs, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir set out from Basra heading for Khorasan, and he went ahead of Sa'eed and camped in Abarshahr. News of his camping in Abarshahr reached Sa'eed, so Sa'eed camped in Qumees, with whose people there was a peace treaty that had been drawn up by Hudhayfah after Nahawand. He went to Jarjân and they made a deal with him in return for two hundred thousand. Then he went to Tameesah, which was part of Tabaristan Jarjân; it was a coastal city on the border of Jarjân. He fought its people until he offered the fear prayer, then he said to Hudhayfah: How did the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ pray? He told him, so Sa'eed offered the fear prayer whilst they were fighting. On that day Sa'eed struck a mushrik man on the shoulder and his sword came out beneath his armpit. He besieged them and they asked for safety, which he granted to them, pledging that he would not kill any of their men, so they opened the fortress to him on those terms.

The flight of the Persian king Yazdagird to Khorasan

Ibn 'Aamir came to Basra then he went to Persia and conquered it. Yazdagird fled from Wajooz - which is Ardasheer Khurah - in 30 AH, and Ibn 'Aamir sent Majâshi' ibn Mas'ood al-Sulami after him, and he pursued him as far as Karmân. Then Majâshi' camped in al-Sirjân with his army, and Yazdagird fled to Khorasan.[1]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/288

The death of Yazdagird the Persian king in 31 AH

There is a difference of opinion as to how the killing of Yazdagird came about. Ibn Ishâq said: Yazdagird fled from Karmân with a few people to Marw, where he asked some of its people for money but they refused, as they feared for themselves, and they sent word to the Turks seeking their help against him. They came and killed his companions, and he fled until he reached the house of a man who was a maker of millstones, on the banks of the Marghâb river.[1] He gave him sanctuary for one night, then when he fell asleep he killed him.[2] According to a report narrated by al-Tabari, Yazdagird left Karmân before the Arabs reached it and took the road towards al-Tabaseen and Qahmistan, until he approached Marw with approximately four thousand men, to mobilize people from Khorasan and attack and fight the Arabs. He was met by two commanders in Marw who envied and hated one another; one of whom was called Barâz and the other Sanjân. They gave him their allegiance and he stayed in Marw, but he favoured Barâz, and Sanjân was jealous of that. Barâz started plotting against Sanjân and incited Yazdagird against him, until Yazdagird decided to kill him (Sanjân). He told one of his wives what he had decided to do, but she had been unfaithful to him with Barâz, and she sent a woman to Barâz to tell him that Yazdagird had decided to kill Sanjân. He in turn disclosed what Yazdagird had decided to do, and thus the secret became known. Sanjân found out and took precautions by gathering supporters, ending up with a similar number to the companions of Barâz and the troops who were with Yazdagird. He marched towards the fortress where Yazdagird was staying, and news of that reached Barâz, who fled from Sanjân because he had amassed such a large group. Sajnân's group filled Yazdagird with fear and he fled from his palace in disguise, fleeing blindly on foot in fear for his life. He went about two parasangs, then he

[1] The Marghâb is the river of Marw.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/295

reached the miller's house, which he entered and sat down, utterly exhausted. The miller saw him in his fine clothes and gave him a mattress to sit on, and brought him food. He stayed with him for one day and one night, then the miller asked him to give him something and he offered him a belt encrusted with gems that he was wearing, but the miller refused to accept it and said: All I want, instead of this belt, is four dirhams with which to buy food and drink. He told him that he had no silver with him. The miller kept an eye on him until he fell asleep, then he took an axe and struck him on the head with it, and killed him. He chopped off his head and took the clothes and belt that he was wearing, then he threw his body in the river that drove the millstone. He opened his belly and filled it with branches from the trees that grew by the river, so that the body would sink in the place where he threw it, and would not float downstream lest the matter become known and the killer sought along with the things that he had taken. Then he fled.[1]

In another report it says that the Turks came looking for him (Yazdagird) and they found that he had been killed and his possessions taken, so they killed that man and the members of his household, and they took the goods that had been with Chosroes. They also recovered the body of Chosroes and put it in a box, which they carried to Istakhr.[2]

Al-Tabari mentioned two lengthy reports, one of which is longer than the other, which indicate the different turmoils and troubles that he went through until he met his end.[3] According to some reports, Yazdagird said to those who wanted to hill him: Woe to you! We find in our book that those who dare to kill kings, God will punish them with fire in this world, in addition to what is to come in the Hereafter, so do not kill me; rather take me to the grandee or take me to the Arabs, for they let kings like me live.[4]

---

[1] *Khilâfat 'Uthmân* by as-Sulami, p. 57

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/297

[3] *al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 4/417

[4] op. cit., 4/418; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/302

The reign of Yazdagird lasted for twenty years, of which four were trouble-free, but the rest of the time was spent fleeing from city to city for fear of Islam and the Muslims. He was the last of the kings of Persia in this world.[1] Glory be to the Almighty, the true Sovereign, the Ever-Living, Eternal One Who will never die; there is no god but He. All things will perish save His Countenance, His is the power and to Him you will return.[2] The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said of the kings of Persia and Byzantium:

«إِذَا هَلَكَ قَيْصَرُ فَلا قَيْصَرَ بَعْدَهُ، وإذا هَلَكَ كِسْرَى فَلا كِسْرَى بَعْدَهُ، والَّذِي نَفسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتُنْفَقَنَّ كُنوزُهُما في سَبيلِ اللهِ»

"When Caesar dies there will be no Caesar after him, and when Chosroes dies, there will be no Chosroes after him. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, you will certainly spend their wealth for the sake of Allâh."[3]

The Christians expressed their sorrow on the death of Yazdagird

News of Yazdagird's killing reached a man from al-Ahwâz who was the patriarch of Marw, whose name was Eeliya'. He gathered the Christians around him and said to them: The king of Persia has been killed, the son of Shahriyâr the son of Kisra. Shahriyâr was the son of the believing woman Shireen whose rights and many acts of kindness to her fellow-Christians you acknowledged. This king was connected to the Christians and moreover the Christians gained a lot of glory and honour during the reign of his grandfather Chosroes and before that, during the reign of some other kings before them. He built monasteries for them and supported them. So we should feel sorrow for the

[1] *Khilâfat 'Uthmân* by Dr. as-Sulami, p. 57

[2] *al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 4/419

[3] Muslim, *al-Fitan*, no. 2918, 2919, *Al-Bukhari* (6629)

slaying of this king because of the kindness that he and his predecessors and his grandmother Shireen showed to the Christians. I think that I will build a sepulchre for him and convey his body in a dignified manner to be buried in that sepulchre. The Christians said: We are at your command, O patriarch, and we support your opinion. So the patriarch ordered that a sepulchre be built in the middle of the partiarch's garden in Marw, and he himself went with the Christians of Marw to take the body of Yazdagird out of the river, then they shrouded it and placed it in a coffin, then the Christians of Marw who were with him carried it on their shoulders and brought it to the sepulchre that had been built, wherein he was placed and the door of the sepulchre was sealed.[1]

The conquests of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, 31 AH

In the same year, 31 AH, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir marched to Khorasan where he conquered Abarshahr, Toos, Biyurd, and Nisa, until he reached Sarkhas, where he entered into a treaty with the people of Marw. According to one report, al-Sakan ibn Qatâdah al-'Urayni said: Ibn 'Aamir conquered Persia and come back to Basra, and he appointed Shareek ibn al-A'war al-Hârithi as governor of Istakhr. Shareek built the mosque of Istakhr. A man from Banu Tameem - we used to say that it was al-Ahnaf but it was also said that it was Aws ibn Jâbir al-Jushami - entered upon Ibn 'Aamir and said to him: Your enemy is fleeing from you and he is afraid of you. The land that lies ahead of you is vast, so march and Allâh will support you and cause His religion to prevail. So Ibn 'Aamir made preparations and ordered the people to prepare to march, and he appointed Ziyâd in charge of Basra in his absence. He marched to Karmân, then he headed towards Khorasan. Some say that he took the road to Asbahân, then he headed towards Khorasan. He appointed Majâshi' ibn Mas'ood al-Sulami in charge of Karmân, then Ibn 'Aamir headed towards Mafâzat Wâbar, which is eighty parasangs, then he went towards

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/304

al-Tabaseen, heading towards Abarshahr, which is the city of Nishapur. At the head of his army was al-Ahnaf ibn Qays. He headed first to Fahastan, then he set out for Abarshahr, where he was met by the Habâtilah, who are the people of Herat. Al-Ahnaf fought them and defeated them, then Ibn 'Aamir came to Nishapur.[1]

According to another report, Ibn 'Aamir attacked Abarshahr and defeated half of it by force, and the other half was under the control of Kanâri, who also controlled half of Nasawatoos. Ibn 'Aamir was not able to reach Marw, so he made a treaty with Kanâri, who gave him his son Abu'l-Salt ibn Kanâri and his nephew Saleem as hostages. He told 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khâzim to go to Herat and Hâtim ibn al-Nu'mân to go to Marw, and he took the son and nephew of Kanâri to al-Nu'mân ibn al-Afqam, then set them free.[2] Ibn 'Aamir conquered the regions around Abarshahr, such as Toos, Biyurd, Nasa and Hamrân, until he reached Sarkhas, then Ibn 'Aamir told al-Aswad ibn Kulthoom al-'Adawi - the enemy of al-Rabâb - to go to Babhaq, which was part of Abarshahr, sixteen parasangs away. He conquered it, but al-Aswad ibn Kulthoom was killed; he was a pious man and was one of the companions of 'Aamir ibn 'Abd-Allâh al-'Anbari. After he was expelled from Basra, 'Aamir used to say: I would not miss anything in Iraq except going thirsty at the time of extreme heat (when fasting) and hearing the adhân reverberate and brothers such as al-Aswad ibn Kulthoom.[3] Ibn 'Aamir managed to conquer Nishapur, then he went out to Sarkhas and sent word to the people of Marw seeking a peace deal. Ibn 'Aamir sent to them Hâtim ibn al-Nu'mân al-Bâhili, who made a treaty with Barâz, the ruler of Marw in return for two million and two hundred thousand.[4]

---

[1] op. cit., 5/305

[2] op. cit., 5/306

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/307

[4] op. cit., 5/307

The campaign of al-Bâb and Balanjar in 32 AH

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân wrote to Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas saying: Send Salmân to conquer al-Bâb. And he wrote to 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Rabee'ah, who was in charge of al-Bâb, saying: Most of the people are living a life of luxury and putting on weight, so take it easy and do not expose the Muslims to danger, for I am afraid that they may be exposed to hardship. But that did not deter 'Abd ar-Rahmân from reaching his goal. He insisted on attacking Balanjar. He set out on campaign in the ninth year of 'Uthmân's caliphate, and when he reached Balanjar they besieged it and set up catapults and other war machines. If anyone came close, they harassed him or killed him, so many people were killed.[1] Then one day the Turks made an agreement with the people of Balanjar and they came out and the Turks joined them, then fighting broke out. 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Rabee'ah was killed, and the Muslims fled and scattered. Those who followed Salmân ibn Rabee'ah escaped and left al-Bâb safely, but those who followed the route of al-Khazar which leads to the Khazar country conquered Jaylân and Jarjân; among them were Salmân al-Fârisi and Abu Hurayrah.[2]

The killing of Yazeed ibn Mu'âwiyah

The people of Kufah kept attacking Balanjar for many years during 'Uthmân's reign, and no woman among them was widowed and no child was orphaned, until the ninth year of 'Uthmân's reign when two days before the major battle, Yazeed ibn Mu'âwiyah saw in a dream that a gazelle was brought to him in his tent, and he had never seen any gazelle more beautiful than it, and the gazelle got under his cloak. Then he was brought to a grave over which four people were standing, and he had never seen anything as smooth and lovely as this grave, and he was buried in it. When the people met the Turks in battle, a stone was

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/308

[2] op. cit., 5/309

thrown at Yazeed and smashed his head, and it was as if he was adorned with his blood, not smeared with it. That was the gazelle that he had seen (in his dream).[1] Yazeed was very handsome and good looking (may Allâh have mercy on him). When news of that reached 'Uthmân he said: To Allâh we belong and unto Him is our return. Tragedy has befallen the people of Kufah. O Allâh, forgive them.[2]

'How beautiful would the redness of blood be on your whiteness'

'Amr ibn 'Utbah used to say to a white cloak that he wore: How beautiful would the redness of blood be on your whiteness. He was injured whilst engaging the enemy and he saw his cloak as he had always wished, then he died.[3]

'How beautiful is the glistening of blood on garments'

Al-Qarsha' used to say: How beautiful is the glistening of blood on garments. On the day of the great battle, al-Qarsha' fought until he was stabbed many times with spears, and it was as if his cloak was a white background decorated with red. The people remained steadfast until he was injured, but they were defeated after he died.[4]

'They die as you die'

During that battle, the Turks hid in the forest. They feared the Muslims and believed that weapons did not affect them. It so happened that a Turk hid in a grove of trees and shot an arrow at a Muslim and killed him. He called out to his people: They die as you die, why are you afraid? So the Turks were encouraged to fight the Muslims and they came out of their hiding-places and attacked them, causing large numbers of casualties. The fighting

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/310

[2] op. cit., 5/311

[3] op. cit., 5/310

[4] ibid.

grew fierce but 'Abd al-Rahmân stood his ground until he was martyred.[1]

'Patience, O people of Salmân'

According to another report, when 'Abd al-Rahmân was martyred, his brother Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili took the banner and fought carrying it. A caller cried out, Patience, O people of Salmân. Salmân said: Why is that? Do you see panic? Salmân and Abu Hurayrah al-Dawsi went towards Jeelân[2] and crossed it, heading towards Jarjân[3] , withdrawing from a losing battle[4] after burying his brother 'Abd al-Rahmân on the outskirts of Balanjar.[5] By means of this withdrawal, Salmân saved the rest of his brother's army.[6]

Mahmoud Sheet Khattâb thought this report more likely to be correct, and he said: Withdrawing is more akin to resuming fighting as the pressure on them had intensified and they had incurred many losses. This would enable them to join another group of Muslims and attack the enemy again. Salmân ibn Rabee'ah had come with reinforcements to 'Abd al-Rahmân on 'Uthmân's orders, and it would make no sense for him to stay there when his reinforcements at al-Bâb and it is not possible that his brother 'Abd al-Rahmân would ignore him when he was fighting a vicious battle in which he needed every single soldier. How could 'Abd al-Rahmân ignore an entire army at the head of which was his own brother, and not benefit from it in battle?

The ancient historians used the word *hazeemah* (lit. defeat) to mean withdrawal, because most of them were civilians who did not distinguish between the two terms. Hazeemah (defeat) meant leaving the battlefield in a disorganized fashion with no

---

[1] *Qâdat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia,* by Muhammad Khattâb, p.151

[2] Jeelân: land beyond Tabaristan

[3] Jarjân: A famous big city between Tabaristan and Khorasan.

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/309; Qâdat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia, p. 151

[5] *Mu'jam al-Buldân,* 2/278

[6] *Qâdat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia,* p. 151

leadership, so it was a disaster; whereas withdrawal meant leaving the battlefield according to a strategic plan under a single leadership. Withdrawal was one of the aspects of fighting, the aim of which was to regroup and attack the enemy anew after making necessary preparations with regard to numbers and equipment. We hope that modern historians will not make the same mistake by failing to distinguish between a defeat and a withdrawal, because the difference between the two is very important.[1]

The first dispute between the people of Kufah and the people of Syria, 32 AH

When 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Rabee'ah was killed, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas appointed Salmân ibn Rabee'ah in charge of that division, and 'Uthmân sent people from Syria as reinforcements, in charge of whom was Habeeb ibn Maslamah. Habeeb and Salmân disputed as to who would be overall commander. The people of Syria said: We were about to strike Salmân. The people said: In that case we will beat and imprison Habeeb, and if you insist, we will have a fight and there will be many slain on your side and ours.

The Muslims managed to contain the fitnah with the help of Allâh, then the presence of people such as Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamân, who was in charge of the people of Kufah during the campaign. He had gone on campaign three times in that region, and 'Uthmân was killed during his third campaign.[2]

The conquests of Ibn 'Aamir, 32 AH

During this year, Ibn 'Aamir conquered Marw Roodh, al-Tâliqân, al-Fâriyâb, al-Jawzajân and Takharistan. Ibn 'Aamir sent al-Ahnaf ibn Qays to Marw Roodh where he lay siege to its people, then they came out and fought them, but the Muslims defeated them and they were forced to hide in their fortress. They

[1] op. cit., p. 152, 152

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/311

looked out at him and said: O Arabs, you are not as we thought you were. If we had known that you are as we see, things would be different between us and you. Give us one day to think about it, and go back to your camp. So al-Ahnaf went back, and the next day he found that they had prepared to fight him. One of the non-Arab men came out with a letter from the city and he said: I am just a messenger, so grant me safety, and they gave him safety. He was a messenger from the satrap of Marw, his nephew and interpreter, and the satrap had sent a letter to al-Ahnaf. He read the letter and said: It is addressed to the commander of the army. We praise Allâh in Whose hand are all nations; He changes whomever He wills of kings, and raises whomever He wills after being low, and lowers whomever He wills after being high. He is calling me to make peace with you because my grandfather became a Muslim and because of what he has seen from your leader of honour. So welcome, and be of good cheer. I invite you to make peace between you and us on the basis that we will pay you a *kharâj* of sixty thousand dirhams, and you will let me keep control of that which the king of kings Chosroes allocated to my father's grandfather when he killed the snake that ate people and prevented them from travelling between lands and towns, and you will not take *kharâj* from any member of my family and you will leave them in positions of authority. If you accept this from me, I will come out and meet you. I have sent my nephew Mâhik to discuss matters with you.

Al-Ahnaf wrote back to him, saying:

In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From Sakhr ibn Qays the commander of the army, to Badhân the satrap of Marw Roodh and the non-Arabs and Persians who are with him. Peace be upon those who follow true guidance and believe and fear Allâh. Your nephew Mâhik has come to me and has acted with sincerity and conveyed your message. I have discussed it with the Muslims who are with me, and we are all in agreement with regard to your case. We agree to the terms that you asked for and presented to us, on the condition that you pay

(*kharâj*) for your agricultural activities and your peasants and the land that you said the tyrant Chosroes himself gave to your father's grandfather because he killed the snake that was causing mischief in the land and preventing people from travelling. The earth belongs to Allâh and He gives it as an inheritance to whomsoever He wills among His slaves. You will also have to support the Muslims and fight their enemies along with whoever is with you of the non-Arabs, whenever the Muslims want you to do that. In return for that, you will have the support of the Muslims against those who would fight you. I will be your protector. You will have a written document which you can keep after I am gone. No *kharâj* will be demanded from you or any of your household or relatives. If you become Muslim and follow the Messenger, then you will have a stipend from the Muslims and status and income, and you will be their brother, and in return you will have my protection and the protection of my father and the Muslims and their fathers. What is in this letter was witnessed by Juz' ibn Mu'âwiyah or Mu'âwiyah ibn Juz' al-Sa'di, Hamzah ibn al-Harmâs, Humayd ibn al-Khiyâr al-Mâzniyân and 'Iyâd ibn Warqa' al-Usaydi. It was written by Kaysân the freed slave of Banu Tha'labah on a Sunday in Muharram and sealed by the commander of the army al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, and engraved on the seal of al-Ahnaf was (the phrase) "We worship Allâh."[1]

Fighting between the army of al-Ahnaf and the people of Takhâristan, al-Jawzajân, al-Tâliqân and al-Fariyâb

Ibn 'Aamir made a peace treaty with the people of Marw, and he sent al-Ahnaf with four thousand men to Takhâristan, and he proceeded until he stopped at the place where the palace of al-Ahnaf is in Marw Roodh. The people of Takhâristan, and the people of al-Jawzajân, al-Tâliqân and al-Fariyâb, gathered to fight him, so there were three armies, thirty thousand men in all. News of their numbers reached al-Ahnaf, and he consulted the people,

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/316

but their opinions differed. Some of them said let us go back to Marw; some said let us go back to Abarshahr; some said let us stay and await reinforcements; and some said, let us meet them in battle and fight them. When evening came, al-Ahnaf went out walking in the camp, listening to what the people were saying. He passed by some people in a tent, where a man had lit a cooking fire or was making dough, and they were talking and discussing the enemy. Some of them said: It is up to the ameer, if he wants to march towards them in the morning so that he can engage with the people where they are; that will be more effective in casting fear into their hearts and starting the fight with them. The one who was cooking or making dough said: If he does that, then he will be making a mistake and so will you. Do you want him to go and meet the enemy in a plain in their own land and face this huge multitude with his small number? If they launch a single attack they will finish us off. But it is up to him, if he wants to camp between the Marghâb (river) and the mountain, let him put the river on his right and the mountain on his left, then the enemy will not be able to send a greater number than he has with him. Al-Ahnaf went back convinced of what they were saying, and he set up his camp. The people of Marw sent word to him offering to fight alongside him, but he said: I do not like to seek help from the mushrikeen. Stick to the deal that we made. If we win, the deal will remain in effect, but if they win and fight you, then fight them on your own behalf. At the time of 'Asr prayer, the *mushrikoon* attacked, but the Muslims fought back and the two parties remained steadfast until evening came.

According to another report, they fought until most of the night had passed, and the Muslims defeated them and drove them back until they reached Raskan, which is twelve parasangs from the palace of al-Ahnaf. The satrap of Marw Roodh had kept back a load to pay the Muslims in accordance with the peace deal, waiting to see what the outcome of the fighting would be. When al-Ahnaf won, he sent two men to the satrap and told them not to speak to him until they got the payment, and they did that. He realized that they would not have come to demand the payment if

they had not won, so he paid what he owed.[1]

Al-Ahnaf sent al-Aqra' ibn Hâbis with a detachment of cavalry to al-Jawzajân to mop up some of the remnants of the army that al-Ahnaf had defeated, and he fought them. The Muslims launched an attack and some of their horsemen were killed, then Allâh granted the Muslims victory over them and they defeated them and killed them.

Al-Ahnaf's treaty with the people of Balkh, 32 AH

Al-Ahnaf travelled from Marw Roodh to Balkh and besieged it, then he made a peace treaty with them in return for four hundred thousand. He appointed his cousin, Usayd ibn al-Mutashammis to take from them what they had agreed to pay, then he went to Kharizm where he stayed until the onset of winter. He said to his companions: What do you want (to do)? They said: 'Umar ibn Ma'di Yakrib said:

If there is something that you cannot do, then leave it and do something that you can do.

So al-Ahnaf gave orders to move on, and headed towards Balkh. His cousin had taken that which they had agreed to pay, and it so happened that the time when he was concluding the deal coincided with their festival of Mahrajân, so they brought him gifts of gold and silver vessels, dinars and dirhams, goods and clothing. The cousin of al-Ahnaf said: Is this part of the deal that you made? They said: No, but this is something that we do on this day for those in authority over us, to placate them. He said: And what is this day? They said: al-Mahrajân. He said: I do not know what that is, and I do not want to return it when I may be entitled to it; but I will take it and set it aside until I decide how to dispose of it. So he took it and set it aside, and when al-Ahnaf came, he told him about it, and he asked them about it, and they told him the same as they had told his cousin. He said: I shall take it to the commander. So he took it to Ibn 'Aamir and told him about it, and

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/317

he said: Take it, O Abu Bahr, it is yours. He said: I have no need of it. Ibn 'Aamir said: Take it, O Mismâr.[1]

'I shall give my thanks to Allâh by entering *ihrâm* from the point from which I set out for 'umrah'

When al-Ahnaf went back to Ibn 'Aamir, the people said to Ibn 'Aamir: No one has ever achieved victories in Persia, Karmân, Sijistan and all of Khorasan as you have. He said: No doubt I shall give my thanks to Allâh by entering *ihrâm* from the point from which I set out for 'umrah. So he entered *ihrâm* for 'Umrah from Nishapur, but when he came to 'Uthmân he criticized him for entering *ihrâm* from Khorasan, and said: I wish that you had done it from the *miqât* from which people enter *ihrâm*.[2]

The defeat of Qârin in Khorasan

When Ibn 'Aamir returned from his campaign, he appointed Qays ibn al-Haytham as governor of Khorasan. Then Qârin came with an army of forty thousand Turks and was met by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khâzim al-Sulami with four thousand men. He put six hundred men at the front of the army and told each one of them to put fire on the top of his spear and march towards them in the middle of night and attack them. So the vanguard engaged with them and started fighting, then 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khâzim came with the rest of the Muslims and surrounded them. The mushrikoon turned and fled, and were pursued by the Muslims who killed whomever they wished, and Qârin was among the slain. The Muslims captured a great deal of booty and wealth. Then 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khâzim sent news of the victory to Ibn 'Aamir, who was pleased with him and confirmed his position as governor of Khorasan. That was because he had played a trick on the previous governor, Qays ibn al-Haytham al-Sulami, when he made him leave Khorasan then he took on the mission of fighting Qârin. When he defeated him and took booty from his camp, Ibn 'Aamir

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/319

[2] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/167; *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/319

was pleased with him and confirmed his position as governor of Khorasan.[1]

Thus the caliph 'Uthmân tackled the rebel movements that appeared in the east, and continued the conquests. These rebellions did not weaken the Muslims or weaken the resolve of the caliph who was able to deal with them. He confronted them in a swift and decisive manner, sending wave after wave of reinforcements and appointing the right man for each task, as is clear from a study of the events narrated in *Tareekh at-Tabari*, Ibn Katheer and al-Kalâ'i, which leaves no doubt that 'Uthmân made the right choice in selecting the leaders who were able to attain these victories and contain these turmoils, even though the mission of jihad was very difficult and needed someone who could direct it properly, because there were so many fronts and so much turmoil, with huge distances between the various regions.

In dealing with these problems that confronted 'Uthmân after he became caliph, he faced them with resolve, sound thinking, swiftness, caution and deliberation, which is indicative of his strength of character and sound insight. Thanks to these characteristics - after the help of Allâh - he was able to reinforce the authority of the state after it had been shaken and weakened by the killing of 'Umar ﷺ. The fruits borne by these brilliant characteristics were as follows:

1- Subjugation of the rebels and restoration of Muslim power over them

2- Advancement of Islamic conquests beyond the rebel areas, to prevent their enemies from fleeing there and stirring up trouble from those regions.

3- Establishment of strong Muslim outposts to protect the lands that had submitted to Muslim rule.

Could all these great conquests, wise policies and proper

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/167

control of the regions have been achieved if 'Uthmân had been weak and unable to take decisions?[1] - as is claimed by those who are deceived by the reports of the Râfidis, Shi'ah and Orientalists, and those who follow in their sick footsteps.

One of the leaders of the conquests in the east at the time of 'Uthmân: al-Ahnaf ibn Qays

The conquests at the time of 'Uthmân ✻ were great indeed. I think it is appropriate to shed some light on some of the leaders of conquest at the time of 'Uthmân. From the discussion of the eastern conquests above, it is important to paint a bright picture of one of the leaders of these conquests, and I chose al-Ahnaf ibn Qays.

His lineage and family

He was Abu Bahr, al-Ahnaf ibn Qays ibn Mu'âwiyah ibn Husayn ibn Hafs ibn 'Ubâdah al-Tameemi.[2] His given name was al-Dahhâk, or it was said, Sakhr.[3] His mother was Habbah bint 'Amr ibn Qurt al-Bâhiliyyah.[4] Her brother was al-Akhtal ibn Qurt, one of those who were known for bravery. Al-Ahnaf said, boasting about this maternal uncle of his: Who has an uncle like mine?[5]

His life

He was one of the senior Tâbi'een, a leader among his people[6] and a leader of the people of Basra.[7] He was trusted by people of all classes and inclinations, and he was wise, smart and intelligent,[8] religiously committed, clever and eloquent.[9]

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah,* 1/408, 409

[2] *Jamharat Ansâb al-'Arab,* p. 217;*Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd,* 7/95

[3] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* by Mahmoud Khattâb, p. 285

[4] ibid.

[5] *Jamharat Ansâb al-'Arab,* p. 212

[6] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 285

[7] *al-Isâbah,* 1/103; *Asad al-Ghâbah,* 1/55

[8] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 304

[9] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 304

He was the leader of his people, endued with intelligence, wisdom, knowledge and forbearance, and he set an example by his forbearance.

Khâlid ibn Safwân said of him: al-Ahnaf fled from honour, but honour pursued him.[1] There follows a list of some of his qualities that affected the people around him.

His forbearance

al-Ahnaf was forbearing and his forbearance was exemplary. He was asked about forbearance and what it was, and he replied: It is humility with patience. When people admired his forbearance he would say: I feel the same as you do, but I am patient; I only learned forbearance from Qays ibn 'Aasim al-Manqari.[2] A nephew of his killed one of his sons, and was brought to him bound up. He said: You are scaring the lad. Then he turned to the lad and said: What a bad thing you have done; you have weakened your numbers and reduced your support; you have made your enemies rejoice and hurt your people. Let him go and take the diyah to the mother of the slain one, for she is a stranger (not of our people). Then the killer left and Qays never took off his shawl (worn as a sign of mourning) and his expression never changed.[3] A man said to al-Ahnaf, Teach me forbearance, O Abu Bahr. He said: It is humility, O son of my brother; can you put up with it? And he said: I am not forbearing but I am trying to be.[4] Another example of his forbearance is when a man reviled him but he said nothing. The man reviled him again but again he said nothing. The man said: O God, nothing is keeping him from responding except that he thinks I am insignificant.[5] And he used to say: The one who cannot bear to hear a word will hear many words, and there may be anger that is suppressed for fear of

---

[1] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asâkir*, 7/13

[2] *al-Isti'âb*, 3/1294

[3] *Wafiyât al-A'yân*, 2/188

[4] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 306

[5] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 306

worse consequences.[1] But his forbearance was that of one who is strong and able, not that of one who is weak and incapable. He fought fiercely in some battle situations, and a man said to him: O Abu Bahr, where is forbearance? He said: I left it at home.[2]

His wisdom

al-Ahnaf was wise and smart. He said on one occasion: Whoever has four qualities will become the leader of his people without any competition: if he has religious commitment that restrains him, good lineage to protect him, wisdom to guide him and modesty to guard him.[3]

And he said: Wisdom is the best companion, good manners are the best inheritance, and Allâh's help is the best thing you can have.[4] And he said: I never say anything bad about anyone after he leaves my presence. If mention of a man was made in his presence, he would say: Let him consume his due provision and death will come to him at the appointed time.[5] His nephew complained of a toothache and he said: I lost my eye thirty years ago and I did not mention it to anyone.[6] And he said: No one who was of a higher status than me disputed with me but I acknowledged his position, and no one who was of a lower status than me disputed with me but I refused to sink to his level, and no one who was of equal status with me disputed with me but I did him a favour and let him win.[7]

His knowledge

He was a trustworthy scholar who narrated a few hadeeth. He narrated from 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, 'Ali

[1] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 306

[2] op. cit., p. 306

[3] op. cit., p. 306

[4] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asâkir*, 7/19

[5] op. cit., 7/21

[6] op. cit., 7/16

[7] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 307

ibn Abi Tâlib and Abu Dharr al-Ghifâri.[1] Al-Hasan al-Basri, 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr and others narrated from him.[2] He was one of the prominent *fuqaha'* at the time of Mu'âwiyah.

His wisdom

He was wise and spoke with wisdom. He was asked about chivalry and said: It is piety and forbearance.

He was asked about chivalry and said: It is adhering to the limits set by religion, patience in the face of calamity, honouring one's parents, forbearance at the time of anger and forgiveness when one is able to take revenge.[3]

And he said: Good manners are expressed in good words, and there is no goodness in speaking without action, or in looking good without being good inside, or in wealth without generosity, or in a friend unless he is sincere, or in knowledge (of religion) without piety, or in charity without the proper intention.[4]

And he said: Keep your favours intact by never mentioning them.[5] And he said: Laughing too much takes away dignity and joking too much takes away chivalry; whoever adheres to a thing will become known for it.[6] And he said: Keep women and food away from our gathering, for I would hate for a man to be in service to his private parts and his stomach; chivalry is when a man refrains from eating food that he desires.[7]

And he said (when praised by the masses): Leadership is with the masses - meaning, The one whose name is not mentioned on the lips of the masses and recognized as a leader will not benefit if only the elite recognize his leadership.[8]

---

[1] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 7/93

[2] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 308

[3] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 308

[4] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asâkir*, 7/19, 20

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/331

[6] *Wafiyât al-A'yân*, by Ibn Khalkân, 2/187

[7] *Wafiyât al-A'yân*, 2/188

[8] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 309

His eloquence

He was eloquent and well spoken.[1] On one occasion he delivered a speech and said, after praising and glorifying Allâh: O people of al-Azd and Rabee'ah, you are our brothers in faith, and you are related to us by marriage and by ties of blood, and you are our neighbours in the land, and we are all facing a common enemy. By Allâh, the people of al-Azd in Basra are dearer to us than Tameem in Kufah, and the people of al-Azd in Kufah are dearer to us than Tameem in Syria. If you feel any jealousy in your heart, then you will find that our patience and wealth are enough for us and you.[2] He was sharp-witted and skilled in argument. Al-Ahnaf came to some people who were discussing blood money *(diyah)* and he said: You pass judgement. They said: We want two diyahs. He said: You will get what you want. When they fell silent he said: I will give you what you have asked for, but I want to tell you something: Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, has decreed one diyah, and the Prophet ﷺ decreed one diyah. Today you are seeking compensation, but I fear that one day you may be asked for blood money, and the people will only accept from you that for which you yourselves set a precedent. They said: Then we will accept one diyah.[3] Al-Ahnaf heard a man say: I do not care if I am praised or criticized. He said to him: You will have peace of mind that noble people will never have.[4]

His selflessness

Al-Ahnaf loved for others what he loved for himself, rather he preferred others over himself when it came to kindness and favours, and he would be pleased when he did good for other people. When al-Ahnaf came to 'Umar in Madînah, the caliph offered him a gift, and he said: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen,* by Allâh, we did not cross the wilderness and come all this way for gifts. All

[1] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 309

[2] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 309

[3] *Wafiyât al-A'yân,* 2/188

[4] *Wafiyât al-A'yân,* 2/188

I want is to fulfil the needs of those who are with me. And this increased him in status in 'Umar's eyes.[1]

His trustworthiness

al-Ahnaf was very trustworthy. We have seen that when he appointed his nephew as governor of the people of Balkh, and when his nephew took possession of what had been agreed to in the treaty, they also brought him vessels of gold and silver, dinars and dirhams, goods and clothing. His nephew said to them: Is this part of the deal that you made? They said: No, but this is something that we do on this day for those in authority over us, to placate them. He said: And what is this day? They said: al-Mahrajân. He said: I do not know what that is, and I do not want to return it when I may be entitled to it; I will take it and set it aside until I decide how to dispose of it. So he took it and set it aside, and when al-Ahnaf came, he told him about it, and he asked them about it, and they told him the same as they had told his cousin. He said: I shall take it to the commander. So he took it to Ibn 'Aamir and told him about it, and he said: Take it, O Abu Bahr, it is yours. He said: I have no need of it.[2] Al-Ahnaf was not comfortable even with a gift; he was content with his share of the booty.[3]

His deliberation

Al-Ahnaf was very deliberate, and he would not do anything until he had thought it over a thousand times. It was said to him: O Abu Bahr, you have a great deal of deliberation. He said: I know myself to be hasty in three things: in my prayer when the time comes, until I have prayed; when there is a funeral, which I attend until the body is buried in the grave; and if someone compatible proposes marriage to my daughter, until I give her to him in marriage.[4]

---

[1] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asâkir*,7/12

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/319

[3] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, by Mahmoud Khattâb, p. 313

[4] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 7/96

His piety

Al-Ahnaf was a pious believer who was strong in faith. He hastened to embrace Islam as soon as the call reached him, and his people became Muslim on his advice.[1] He gave protection to the early dâ'iyahs[2] and was steadfast in his belief when most of his people and most of the Arabs apostatized after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. He strove hard and with sincerity to defend Islam, and he achieved great things in that regard. Al-Hasan al-Basri said of him: I have never seen a prominent man of status among his people who was better than him.[3]

Al-Ahnaf said: 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb kept me with him in Madînah for one year, and he came to me every day and night and he never saw anything of me but that which he liked.[4] After al-Ahnaf passed Umar's test - and how difficult and thorough it was - he sent letters with him to the governor of Basra saying: al-Ahnaf is the chief of Basra.[5] He wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari telling him to consult al-Ahnaf and listen to him.[6] 'Umar said to him, after he had kept him with him for a year: O Ahnaf, I have tested you and I have seen nothing but good; I think that you are outwardly good, and I hope that you are the same inwardly as you appear to be outwardly.[7]

Al-Ahnaf was a righteous man who prayed a great deal at night. He would light a lamp and weep until morning. He would put his finger in the lamp and say to himself: If you cannot bear the lamp, then how could you bear the greater Fire?[8] It was said to him: You fast a great deal and that makes the stomach weak.

[1] *Shadhrât al-Dhahab fi Akhbâr min Dhahab,* by Abu'l-Falâh 'Abd al-Hayy, 1/78

[2] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 314

[3] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 314

[4] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 314

[5] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asâkir,* 7/12

[6] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd,* 7/94

[7] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/331

[8] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd,* 7/94; *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan,* p. 315

He said: I am preparing it for a long journey.[1] Al-Ahnaf was appointed as governor of Khorasan and when he went to Persia, he became junub on a cold night; he did not wake any of his slaves or troops, rather he went out looking for water, and he walked over thorny plants and shrubs until his feet flowed with blood. Then he found some icy snow and broke some of it off and did ghusl.[2] Rarely did he find himself alone but he would call for the Mus-haf, for reading the Mus-haf frequently was a characteristic of the early generation.[3] In his du'â' he would say: O Allâh, if You forgive me, then it is because of your generosity, and if You punish me, it is because of my sin.[4] And he would say: O Allâh, grant me certain faith to help me bear the calamities of this world.[5] A funeral passed by him and he said: May Allâh have mercy on the one who strives to prepare for a day like this.[6] And he used to say: I am surprised that the one who has traveled through the urine passages twice[7] can feel arrogant.[8]

These are some of the features of the character of al-Ahnaf, by virtue of which he gained the people's trust, love and respect. These characteristics make the one who acquires them a strong and influential character, such as is rarely found among people in any time or place, or in any era.[9]

Al-Ahnaf was one of the leaders of conquest at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ, and he distinguished himself in his leadership of the army in the east by his ability to prepare sound and successful

---

[1] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 7/94

[2] *Tabaqât Ibn Sa'd*, 7/95

[3] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 315; the biography of al-Ahnaf has been taken largely from this valuable book, as well as from other sources.

[4] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asâkir*, 7/16

[5] ibid.

[6] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/331

[7] i.e., has come from the loins of his father and the womb of his mother. [Translator]

[8] *Qâdat Fath al-Sind wa Afghanistan*, p. 316

[9] op. cit., p.320

strategies and make sound decisions quickly; his personal courage also had a strong effect in laying out those plans and taking decisions when putting those plans into effect. He would do his utmost to prepare battle plans and listen to the advice of people of wisdom; in fact he would go around secretly at night, listening to what his men were talking about, and if he found a good idea he would hasten to implement it; he did not mind accepting wisdom from anywhere he found it. This field commander at the time of 'Uthmân fought with his sword and reason alike. He had such a great deal of courage that he would expose himself to danger rather than expose his men, and he would prefer for them to remain safe. He was also very smart, and by means of his smartness he saved his troops a great deal of effort and hardship.[1]

Al-Ahnaf was a man who was like a nation in himself. He was the leader of the people of the east who was called by a name other than his own, as 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ used to say of him.[2]

I have spoken at length about al-Ahnaf because he was one of the leaders of the conquests at the time of 'Uthmân, and he was one of those who contributed to the major events of the reign of the third Rightly-Guided Caliph, and one of those governors and commanders who have been targeted by lies.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] op. cit., p. 322

[2] op.cit., p. 322

Conquests in Syria

The conquests of Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri

We have seen how the Byzantines gathered huge numbers to fight the Muslims in Syria at the beginning of 'Uthmân's caliphate. 'Uthmân wrote to al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah in Kufah, telling him to send reinforcements to his brethren in Syria, so he sent eight thousand men, led by Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili. The Muslims prevailed over their enemy after penetrating the land of Byzantium and taking prisoners and acquiring booty. The Byzantines had formed an alliance to fight the Muslims who had invaded Armenia from Syria. The commander of the Muslims was Habeeb ibn Maslamah who was crafty in war. He decided to attack the enemy leader al-Mooriyân, by catching him unawares at night. His wife Umm 'Abd-Allâh bint Yazeed al-Kalbiyyah heard him mention that, and she said: Where will we meet? He said: In the courtyard of al-Mooriyân or in Paradise. Then he attacked them at night and defeated them, and when he came to the courtyard of al-Mooriyân, he found that his wife had got there before him.[1] Habeeb continued his jihad and ongoing victories in the lands of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which he conquered

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/248

either by means of treaties or by force.[1]

Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri was one of the prominent commanders who fought in Byzantine Armenia. He wiped out many of the enemy's armies completely and conquered many strongholds and cities.[2] He also invaded the Byzantine lands beyond the borders of Mesopotamia and conquered strongholds there, such as Shamshât, Malatiyyah, and others. In 25 AH, Mu'âwiyah attacked the Byzantines and reached 'Amooriyyah, where he found the strongholds between Antâkiyah (Antioch) and Tarsus empty, so he installed a large number of people from Syria and Iraq there. His commander Qays ibn al-Hurr al-'Absi continued the campaign the following summer, and when he finished, he destroyed some strongholds near Antioch so that the Byzantines could not make use of them.[3]

The first one to allow the Muslims to campaign by sea was 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân

When Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân was the governor of Syria, he urged 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb to campaign by sea, and told him how close the Byzantines were to Homs. He said: In one of the villages of Homs, the people can hear the barking of their dogs and the crowing of their roosters. 'Umar was almost convinced, and he wrote to 'Amr ibn al-'Aas saying: Describe to me the sea and those who sail on it, for I am thinking about it. 'Amr wrote to him, saying: It is like a huge creature being ridden by a small creature; if it stays still it will scare you and if it moves it will make you lose your mind; there is no certainty about it and great doubts about it. They (sailors) are like worms on a stick; if it tilts they will drown and if it is saved you will be astonished. When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb read the letter of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas, he wrote to

---

[1] *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by Hamdi Shaheen, p. 252

[2] *Huroob al-Islam fi'l-Shâm fi 'Uhood al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by Muhammad Ahmad Bashmeel, p. 577

[3] *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen*, p. 253

Mu'âwiyah saying: No, by the One Who sent Muhammad with the truth, I will never let a Muslim campaign by sea. By Allâh, a Muslim is dearer to me than all that the Byzantines have. Stop suggesting that to me.[1] But the idea kept nagging at Mu'âwiyah; he saw the Byzantines and their land, and kept hoping to conquer it. When 'Uthmân became the caliph, he brought the matter up again and urged 'Uthmân to consider it. 'Uthmân replied by saying: I am aware of how 'Umar (may Allâh have mercy on him) responded when you asked him for permission to campaign by sea. Then Mu'âwiyah wrote to him again, trying to convince him that it was no major thing to travel by sea to Cyprus. He wrote back to him saying: If you take your wife with you, then you have our permission to go, otherwise no.[2] The caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ stipulated further conditions by saying: Do not select people and do not draw lots; give them the choice, and whoever chooses to go willingly, let him go with you and help him.[3] When Mu'âwiyah read the letter of 'Uthmân he started mobilizing people to travel by sea to Cyprus. He wrote to the people on the coast ordering them to repair their ships and bring them close to the coast in Palestine at 'Akka (Acre), which he had refurbished so that the Muslims could travel from there to Cyprus.[4]

The campaign to Cyprus

Mu'âwiyah prepared the ships needed to transport the campaigning army, and he took the port of 'Akka as the point of departure for the ships, of which there were many. He took his wife Fâkhitah bint Qarzah with him, and 'Ubâdah ibn al-Sâmit also took his wife, Umm Harâm bint Milhân, with him on that campaign.[5]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/258

[2] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah fi'l-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah,* by Dr. Sulaymân ibn Sâlih, 2/538

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/260

[4] *al-Idârah al-'Askariyyah fi'l-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah,* 2/538

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/159

This Umm Harâm is the lady mentioned in the famous story. It was narrated from Anas ibn Mâlik ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to enter upon Umm Harâm bint Milhân and she would give him food. Umm Harâm was married to 'Ubâdah ibn al-Sâmit. One day the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ entered upon her, and she provided him with food and started grooming his head. Then the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) slept, then he woke up smiling. Umm Harâm asked, "What is making you smile, O Messenger of Allâh?" He said,

«نَاسٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي عُرِضُوا عَلَيَّ غُزَاةً فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ، يَرْكَبُونَ ثَبَجَ هَٰذَا الْبَحْرِ، مُلُوكًا عَلَى الْأَسِرَّةِ، أَوْ مِثْلَ الْمُلُوكِ عَلَى الْأَسِرَّةِ»

"Some people of my ummah were shown to me (in my dream) campaigning for the sake of Allâh, sailing in the middle of the sea like kings on thrones."

Umm Harâm added, "I said, 'O Messenger of Allâh! Pray to Allâh to make me one of them.'" So the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) prayed to Allâh for her and then laid his head down (and slept). Then he woke up smiling (again). (Umm Harâm added): I said, "What is making you smile, O Messenger of Allâh?" He said,

«نَاسٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي عُرِضُوا عَلَيَّ غُزَاةً فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ»

"Some people of my ummah were shown to me (in my dream) campaigning for the sake of Allâh."

He said the same as he had said before. I said, "O Messenger of Allâh! Pray to Allâh to make me one of them." He said, "You will be among the first ones." Then Umm Harâm sailed across the sea during the time of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân, and she fell down from her riding animal after coming ashore, and died.[1]

Although Mu'âwiyah did not force the people to go out on

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri*, no. 2877 and *Muslim*, no. 1912

this campaign, a huge army of Muslims set out with him,[1] which indicates that this world and everything in it were insignificant to the Muslims, and they did not care about it even though its doors were open to them and they were all enjoying its luxuries.

The Muslims had come to learn that that which is with Allâh is better and more lasting, and that Allâh had chosen them to support His religion, establish justice, spread virtue and strive to make the religion of Allâh prevail over all else. They believed that this was their true mission, and that jihad for the sake of Allâh was the way to attain Allâh's pleasure. If they fell short in their mission and failed to fulfil their duties, Allâh would withhold His support from them in this world and deprive them of His pleasure in the Hereafter, and that would be true loss. Because of that, they rushed to go with Mu'âwiyah and raced to embark on the ships. Perhaps they were aware of the hadeeth of Umm Harâm and it motivated them to go out and fight for the sake of Allâh, in confirmation of the hadeeth of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. That was at the end of winter in 28 AH (649 CE).[2]

The Muslims travelled from Syria, embarking from the port of 'Akka and heading for Cyprus. The Muslims landed on the coast and Umm Harâm went to ride her mount, but the animal spooked and Umm Harâm fell to the ground and broke her neck and died.[3] The Muslims left Umm Harâm after burying her on the island, as a symbol of the extent of the sacrifices made by the Muslims for the sake of spreading their religion, and her grave became known there as the grave of a righteous woman.[4]

Mu'âwiyah held a meeting with his companions, among whom was Abu Ayyoob Khâlid ibn Zayd al-Ansâri, Abu'l-Darda', Abu Dharr al-Ghifâri, 'Ubâdah ibn al-Sâmit, Wâthilah ibn

---

[1] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen,* by Dr. Muhammad al-Sayyid al-Wakeel, p. 356

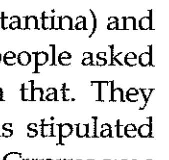
[2] ibid.

[3] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/159

[4] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen,* p. 357

al-Asqa', 'Abd-Allâh ibn Bishr al-Mâzini, *Shadd*âd ibn Aws ibn Thâbit, al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad, Ka'b al-Hibr ibn Mâti' and Jubayr ibn Nufayr al-Hadrami.[1] They discussed among themselves, then sent word to the people of Cyprus telling them that they were not invading to take over their island[2] , rather they wanted to call them to the religion of Allâh, then secure the borders of the Islamic state in Syria, because the Byzantines were using Cyprus as a rest station during their campaigns and taking provisions from it when their supplies ran low, thus it posed a threat to Syria, which was at its mercy. If the Muslims could not be certain that this island was at peace with them and subjugated to their will, then it would remain a thorn in their sides and an arrow aimed at their border. But the inhabitants of the island did not submit to the invaders and did not open their land to them, rather they barricaded themselves in their capital and did not come out to confront the Muslims. The islanders were waiting for the Byzantines to come and save them.[3]

Surrender and request for a peace treaty



The Muslims came to the capital of Cyprus (Qustantina) and besieged it, but it was only a few hours before the people asked for a peace treaty, and the Muslims granted them that. They offered conditions to the Muslims and the Muslims stipulated conditions. The condition stipulated by the people of Cyprus was that the Muslims should not stipulate any condition that would cause trouble for them with the Byzantines, because they could not handle them and were not able to fight them.

The Muslims' conditions were:

1- The Muslims would not defend the island if it was attacked by outsiders

2- The islanders would tell the Muslims about the

[1] ibid.
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.

movements of their Byzantine enemies

3- The islanders would give the Muslims seven thousand and two hundred dinars every year

4- They would not help the Byzantines if they tried to attack the Muslim lands, or tell them about their secrets.[1]

Then the Muslims returned to Syria. This campaign proved the ability of the Muslims to engage in naval campaigns with competence and gave them the opportunity to gain experience in fighting this kind of battle against an enemy who was always watching for an opportunity to attack them in Syria or Alexandria.[2]

'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays, commander of the Muslim navy in Syria

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân appointed 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays al-Jâsi, the ally of Banu Fazârah, in charge of the navy; he led fifty campaigns by sea, some in winter and some in summer, and no one drowned or had any problems. He used to pray to Allâh to keep him and his troops safe, and not allow any of them to be harmed, and He granted that to him. If he wanted to take a risk by himself, he went on his own boat as a scout. He went to one of the ports in Byzantine territory, where there were beggars asking from everyone in that place. He gave charity to them, then one of the beggar women went back to her village and told the men: Are you looking for 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays? They said: Where is he? She said: In the port. They said: O enemy of Allâh, how do you know about 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays? She told them off and said: You are too incompetent to know about 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays. They rushed to him and attacked him, and he fought back, but he was the only one who was killed. The sailor who was with him

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/261

[2] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen*, p. 358, 359

escaped and came to his companions and they came and gathered. His successor as commander was Sufyân ibn 'Awf al-Azdi, who went out and fought them. He was very distressed and started swearing at his companions, and the slave woman of 'Abd-Allâh said, eulogizing him: O 'Abd-Allâh; that is not what he used to say when he fought. Sufyân said: What did he used to say? She said: Hard times (for a while), then that will leave us. So he stopped saying what he used to say and repeated: Hard times (for a while), then that will leave us. The Muslims suffered casualties for the first time on that day, and that was at the end of the time of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays al-Jâsi.[1] And it was said to that woman who told the Byzantines about 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays: How did you know him? She said: He looked like a merchant, but when I asked him (for alms) he gave like a king, so I knew that he was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Qays.[2]

When Allâh wanted to bestow martyrdom upon this great leader, the opportunity became available when he was in a position that would not damage the reputation of the Muslim navy, as he was by himself, watching the enemy. When this smart and crafty woman saw this man who looked like an ordinary merchant but gave like a king, she saw signs of leadership in him despite his ordinary appearance, so she realized that he was the leader of the Muslims who had given the fighters such a hard time in that land. Thus his good manners and generosity, even to non-Muslims, led to his being found out

﴿لِيَقْضِيَ ٱللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا﴾

"So that Allâh might accomplish a matter already ordained (in His Knowledge)" (cf. *An-Anfâl* 8:44),

And he was attacked and attained martyrdom.

Thus he set the highest example for other leaders, so that great

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/260

[2] ibid.

things might be achieved at their hands, and they in turn would be examples for those who came after them. This inspired leader undertook the espionage mission himself and did not delegate it to one of his troops. By going alone on this mission, it may seem that he took too great a risk and exposed himself to death at the hands of the enemy, but he took the risk nevertheless and took on this mission. Moreover we find that he displayed true Islamic attributes, even with the women and the weak ones among the enemy. He showed mercy and compassion towards them, and gave them money, which is the dearest of what people possess. Even before that, we see that he was kind and patient, and did not rebuke anyone or act in an arrogant manner, even when danger surrounded him; he was filled with optimism that the hardship would soon end. He never resorted to rebuking or blaming his companions and he never panicked in a way that spoil a mission or lead to chaos. His successor, Sufyân al-Azdi, may have made the mistakes he did, panicking and blaming his troops, because he was new to the position of commander, but it is to his credit that when the slave woman of 'Abd-Allâh pointed out the wise methods that his former commander used to follow, he hastened to follow his example. He had no sense of pride that would make him ignore the word of truth, even if it was uttered by an unknown slave woman. This is a fine example of selflessness and freedom from following whims and desires; this is the great attitude that was common among the first generation, by means of which the conquests were achieved and the governors and commanders succeeded in running the affairs of the ummah. How great were the people of that generation; how prominent and farsighted, how great the pressure they put on the tyrants and how gentle their approach was to the oppressed and poor.[1]

The Cypriots break the treaty

In 32 AH, the people of Cyprus came under intense pressure from the Byzantines, who forced them to send ships to the

[1] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 12/402

Byzantine army with which to attack the Muslim lands. Thus the Cypriots broke the conditions of the treaty. When Mu'âwiyah learned of the Cypriots' betrayal, he decided to invade the island and bring it under Muslim control. So the Muslims attacked the island, killing, taking prisoners and seizing booty. The army of Mu'âwiyah attacked it from one side and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd attacked it from the other, and they killed many people and captured many prisoners, and seized a great deal of booty.[1] Under pressure from the Muslim forces, the ruler of Cyprus had no choice but to yield to the conquerors and seek a (new) treaty with them, and Mu'âwiyah agreed to the same conditions as in the first treaty.[2] But this time Mu'âwiyah did not want to leave them without a guard stationed on the island to protect it from enemy raids and establish security so that they would not rebel against the Muslims. So he sent twelve thousand troops and brought a group from Bâlabek, and he built a city there, complete with a mosque, and paid a stipend to the troops. Things continued in this vein, with the island at peace and the Muslims safe from sudden attacks by the Byzantines. The Muslims noticed that the Cypriots had no military forces and they were being oppressed by those who attacked them, and they realized that the Byzantines were controlling them and subjugating them to their own interests. So they felt it was their duty to protect them from Byzantine oppression and prevent the Byzantines from taking control of them. Ismâ'eel ibn 'Ayyâsh said: The people of Cyprus are being humiliated and oppressed by the Byzantines who control their affairs and their women; it is our duty to protect them.[3]

How insignificant are the people to Allâh if they disobey Him

During this campaign, when Abu'l-Darda' saw the enemy prisoners, he wept and said: How insignificant are the people to

[1] *Jawalah Tareekhiyyah,* p. 359, 360

[2] *al-Balâdhuri,* p. 158

[3] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyâh,* p. 361

Allâh if they disobey Him. Look at these people: they were powerful and prevailed over their enemies, but when they ignored the commands of Allâh - may He be glorified and exalted - and disobeyed Him, they ended up as you see.[1] According to another report, Jubayr ibn Nufayr said to him: Why are you weeping when Allâh has caused Islam and its people to prevail?

He said: Woe to you, this was a powerful nation that prevailed, but when they neglected the commands of Allâh, they ended up as you see. Allâh has punished them by making them prisoners. And when a people end up prisoners, Allâh has no need of them. He said: How insignificant are the people to Allâh if they disobey Him.[2]

These words uttered by Abu'l-Darda' provide an example of his insight and deep understanding of the decree of Allâh. This great Sahâbi felt sorry for those whom Allâh had caused to be blind, so they did not follow the call of truth and they ended up in this sorry state, when they fell from power and were humiliated and subjugated because they insisted on following falsehood and were too arrogant to submit to the call of truth. If only they had understood and thought things through, by entering Islam they would have held onto their power, authority and lands under the protection of the Islamic state. This deep thought on the part of Abu'l-Darda' was a manifestation of the mercy and compassion that he felt in his heart, which appeared in the form of tears in the eyes of this great man as he expressed his sorrow for the fate of this nation that had continued to follow misguidance and thus met a bad end when it lost its power and was humiliated. As much as the Muslims rejoice when people enter Islam, they grieve when they see the kâfirs living in misguidance because they know the eternal punishment that awaits them in the hereafter. So how about if we add to that their being taken prisoner, exiled or exposed to death in this world?[3]

---

[1] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 12/396

[2] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/159

[3] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 12/397

'Ubâdah ibn al-Sâmit dividing the spoils of Cyprus

'Ubâdah ibn al-Sâmit said to Mu'âwiyah (ﷺ): I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ during the campaign of Hunayn, when the people spoke to him about the booty. He took the hair of a camel and said:

«مَا لِيَ مِمَّا أَفَاءَ اللهُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ هَذِهِ الغَنَائِمِ إِلَّا الخُمُسَ، وَالخُمُسُ مَرْدُودٌ عَلَيْكُمْ»

"I have nothing of that which Allâh has bestowed upon you of this booty except the khums, and the khums is paid back to you."

So fear Allâh, O Mu'âwiyah, and divide the booty properly; do not give anyone more than his fair share. Mu'âwiyah said to him: I give you the task of dividing the booty, for there is no one in Syria who is better or more knowledgeable than you. So divide it among those who are entitled to it and fear Allâh with regard to it. So 'Ubâdah divided it among those who were entitled to it, and Abu'l-Darda' and Abu Umâmah helped him.[1]



[1] *ar-Riyâdh al-nadrah fi Manâqib al-'Asharah* by Abu Ja'farAhmad, who is better known as al-Muhibb at-Tabari, p. 561 (And see Al-Bayhaqei 7/17)

Conquests on the Egyptian front

Suppression of the rebels in Alexandria

The Byzantines were very upset with the loss of Alexandria, and they kept looking for opportunities to take it back. They started inciting the Byzantines who were in Alexandria to rebel against the Muslim authorities because they believed that they could never feel at ease in their own land after the loss of Alexandria.[1] The Byzantines' incitement of the people of Alexandria coincided with the desires of its inhabitants, so they responded to the call and wrote to Constantine, the son of Heraclius, telling him of the small numbers of the Muslims and describing to him how the Byzantines living in Alexandria felt humiliated.[2] 'Uthmân had dismissed 'Amr ibn al-'Aas from his post as governor of Egypt, and replaced him with 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh. During this period, Manuel al-Khassi, the commander of the Byzantine forces, arrived in Alexandria with the aim of recapturing it and taking it from the Muslims. He was accompanied by a huge force carried on three hundred ships that were loaded with all the equipment and weapons they would need.[3]

---

[1] *al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer

[2] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah,* p. 335

[3] ibid.

The people of Egypt knew that the Byzantine forces had landed in Alexandria, so they wrote to 'Uthmân, asking him to reinstate 'Amr ibn al-'Aas so that he could confront the invading forces, because he had experience in fighting them, and he was feared by them. The caliph responded to the Egyptians' request, and he kept Ibn al-'Aas as governor of Egypt.[1] Manuel and his army ransacked Alexandria and left it in ruins, and went on to spread evil and corruption in the surrounding towns. 'Amr ibn al-'Aas let them get carried away so that the Egyptians would see the huge difference between the Muslim rulers and the Byzantine rulers, and the hearts of the Egyptians would be filled with hatred and anger towards the Byzantines and would feel no love or compassion towards them at all. Manuel and his army left Alexandria, heading towards lower Egypt, and they were not confronted by 'Amr and did not meet with resistance from anyone. Some of 'Amr's companions got worried but 'Amr had a different point of view and thought that he should let them come to him. No doubt they were going to ransack the property of the Egyptians and commit atrocities, which would fill the Egyptians' hearts with anger and hatred against them. At that point, if the Muslims decided to confront them, the Egyptians would help to get rid of them. 'Amr described this policy of his by saying: "Let them come to me, for they will attack those whom they pass by, so some will be humiliated at the hands of others.[2] 'Amr's insight proved true, for the Byzantines got carried away in their evildoing, ransacking and looting, and the Egyptians were greatly vexed by their deeds, and they started looking for someone to rid them of the evil of these vicious invaders.[3]

Manuel reached Naqyoos, and 'Amr readied his troops to confront him, then they marched towards this vicious enemy. The two armies met at the fort of Naqyoos on the banks of the Nile. Both armies fought bravely, demonstrating fortitude in the face of

[1] ibid.

[2] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah,* p. 336; *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân,* by Haykal, p. 67

[3] op. cit., p. 336

the enemy, which made the battle even more intense. This motivated the commander 'Amr to penetrate deep into the enemy ranks, urging his horse forward among their horses and wielding his sword among their swords and cutting the necks of men. His horse was struck by an arrow and killed, so 'Amr leapt down and joined the ranks of the foot soldiers. The Muslims saw him and began to fight fiercely like lions, not fearing the clashing of swords.[1] Before this Muslim attack the resolve of the Byzantines failed and they lost their strength. They began fleeing before the heroes whose aim was either of the two good things (martyrdom or victory). The Byzantines fled to Alexandria hoping to find protection in its fortresses and behind its high walls from the shadow of death that was pursuing them.[2]

After they saw the defeat of the Byzantines, the Egyptians came out to repair for the Muslims the roads and bridges that the fleeing enemy had destroyed, and they expressed their joy at the Muslims' defeat of the enemy who had violated their honour and transgressed against their property, offering the Muslims the supplies and weapons that they were lacking.[3]

When 'Amr reached Alexandria, he besieged the Byzantines and set up catapults with which he kept striking the walls of Alexandria until they were weakened. He kept on striking until the people grew weak and the walls cracked, then the city opened its gates and the Muslims entered Alexandria wielding swords against the Byzantines, killing the fighters and taking the women and children captive. Those who managed to escape death fled to the ships to flee back whence they had come and Manuel was among the slain. But the Muslims did not stop killing and capturing people until 'Amr issued orders to that effect when they reached the middle of the city, and there was no longer any resistance.[4] When the Muslims halted their fighting, 'Amr

---

[1] op. cit., p. 338

[2] *al-Balâdhuri*, p. 69

[3] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah*, p. 338

[4] *Jawlah Tareekhiyyah*, p. 338

ordered that a mosque be built in the place where the fighting stopped, and it was called Masjid al-Rahmah (the mosque of mercy).[1]

Peace returned to the capital, and tranquility returned to the hearts of the Egyptians living there. Those who had fled from the terrifying Byzantine invaders returned, including the Coptic Patriarch Benjamin, who had fled with those who fled. He started urging 'Amr not to mistreat the Copts because they had not broken their treaty or neglected their duties; he also urged him not to make any deal with the Byzantines, and to bury him, if he died, in the church of Yuhannas.[2]

The Egyptians came from all directions to thank 'Amr for ridding them of Byzantine oppression and asking him to return their wealth and livestock, and they confirmed their allegiance and obedience to him. They said: The Byzantines took our livestock and wealth and we did not break our deal with you; we were still loyal. 'Amr asked them to bring evidence to support their claims, and whoever was able to identify his property had it returned to him. [3] He also knocked down the walls of Alexandria. That happened in 25 AH, and Alexandria became safe on all sides even though its walls had been knocked down. Lands to the east and the south were under Muslim control, and the lands to the west were secured by 'Amr when he conquered Barqah, Zuwaylah and Tarablus al-Gharb, and made a treaty with the people of these lands in return for *jizyah* that they paid willingly. The area to the north was under Byzantine control, but they had learned a lesson at the hands of the Muslims and were not thinking of coming back; even if they thought of coming back, there was no way they could enter the city because they had no supporters or helpers there, and the Muslims were watching the sea carefully.[4]

---

[1] ibid.

[2] op. cit., p. 340

[3] ibid.

[4] op. cit., p. 341

The conquest of Nubia

'Amr ibn al-'Aas had started to conquer Nubia with the permission of the caliph 'Umar, but he found that the people there fought in a way for which the Muslims had no training. The Nubians would shoot arrows into the eyes of their enemy, and one hundred and fifty eyes were lost in the first battle. Hence the army accepted a peace deal, but 'Amr ibn al-'Aas refused it, hoping for better conditions.[1] When Ibn Sa'd became governor of Egypt, he attacked Nubia in 31 AH, and the people of Nubia fought back fiercely and many of the Muslims suffered eye injuries.[2]

The people of Nubia asked 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd for a peace deal, and he granted them a treaty that lasted for six centuries.[3] The treaty allowed them to remain independent and gave the Muslims security on their southern border. It also opened up Nubia for trade. The Muslims began to mix with the Nubians and many of them embraced Islam.[4]

The conquest of North Africa

Among the aims of the campaign of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas ﷺ in Barqah, Tripoli and the rest of Libya were to conquer the land and remove the yoke of Roman tyranny, so that the people there would have freedom of choice. This blessed campaign brought light into those dark regions where idol worship was common, and where people offered sacrifices to false gods and human beings instead of Allâh; thus they were brought out from worship of people to the worship of the Lord of people. Concerning the campaign of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd in North Africa[5] , Dr Sâlih Mustafa said: In 26 AH/646 CE, 'Amr ibn al-'Aas ﷺ was

---

[1] *al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Râshideen*, p. 229

[2] *Qâdat al-Fath li Bilâd al-Maghrib*, 1/61-63

[3] *al-Khilâfah wa'l-Khulafa' al-Rashideen*, p. 229

[4] *Qâdat al-Fath li Bilâd al-Maghrib*, 1/61-63

[5] *al-Sharaf wa'l-Tasâmi bi Harakat al-Fath al-Islami*, by al-Sallâbi, p. 189

dismissed from his post as governor of Egypt, and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ﷺ was appointed instead. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd sent cavalries as they used to do at the time of 'Amr, and they attacked the borders of North Africa and they acquired booty.[1] The cavalries were heading towards North Africa (Tunis) in preparation to conquer it and so as to find out about it. These cavalries were like scouting parties that were regarded as the vanguard and eyes of the army. When 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd had gathered sufficient information about North Africa with regard to the routes in and out of the region, and the numbers and strength of its armies, and its strategic geographical locations, then he wrote to the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, telling him this important information about North Africa and asking him for permission to conquer it, based on this information. He got what he wanted. Dr. Sâlih Mustafa said: When 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd asked the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân for permission to attack North Africa, he gathered the Sahâbah together and consulted them concerning that. They suggested that it should be conquered, except for Abu'l-A'war Sa'eed ibn Zayd, who disagreed and held to the view of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, that no Muslim should conquer North Africa. When the Sahâbah agreed on that, 'Uthmân called for jihad and Madînah - the capital of the Islamic caliphate - prepared to gather and equip volunteers and send them to Egypt to invade North Africa under the leadership of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd. There was a great deal of interest in this campaign, and it is clear that among those who went out to fight were some of the senior Sahâbah, the best of the youth of the Prophet's family, and the sons of the first Muhâjireen and the Ansâr. Al-Hasan and al-Husayn, Ibn 'Abbâs, Ibn Ja'far and others went out on this campaign.

From the tribe of Mahrah alone, six hundred men went out on the campaign of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd. Ghanath sent seven hundred men, and Meed'ân also sent seven hundred. When the

---

[1] *Libya min al-Fath al-'Arabi hatta Intiqâl al-Khilâfah al-Fâtimiyyah ila Misr*, by Sâlih Mustafa Miftâh al-Muzayni, p. 49

preparations were complete, 'Uthmân addressed them and encouraged them to go for jihad. He said to them: I have appointed al-Hârith ibn al-Hakam to lead you until you join 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, then he will be in command, I leave you in the care of Allâh. It was said that 'Uthmân ﷺ helped this campaign by supplying one thousand camels to carry the poor among the people. When the army reached Egypt, it joined the army of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, and the united army of twenty thousand men proceeded from al-Fustât under the command of 'Abd-Allâh, crossing the Egyptian-Libyan border. When they reached Barqah they were joined by 'Uqbah ibn Nâfi' al-Fihri and the Muslims who were with him. The Muslim army did not encounter any difficulties during their march across Barqah, because the region was adhering to the deal they had made with the Muslims at the time of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas; no *kharâj*-collector even entered the region, rather they sent their *kharâj* to Egypt at the appointed time. The fact that Barqah adhered to the treaty made at the time of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas is confirmed by the fact that he was heard to say: When I was in this position, none of the Copts of Egypt adhered to their covenants with me, except the people of Antablus (i.e., Barqah); there is a covenant that should be adhered to with them. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas also used to say: Were it not for my property in Hijâz, I would have settled in Barqah, for I do not know of any city more safe and secure than it.[1]

So this blessed campaign set out for North Africa, after the forces of 'Uqbah ibn Nâfi' joined them. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, the commander of the campaign, continued to send scouts and spies in all directions to seek out routes and secure them, and keep a watch on enemy movements, so as to protect the army against any ambush that might catch them unawares. As a result of that scouting, they spotted a number of warships belonging to the Roman Empire that were at anchor off the coast of Libya, near the city of Tripoli. Before long, the Muslims took the cargo of these

[1] *Libya min al-Fath al-'Arabi hatta Intiqâl al-Khilâfah al-Fâtimiyyah ila Misr*, p. 39

ships as booty, and they took more than a hundred of their crews as prisoners. This was regarded as the first booty of any value that the Muslims seized on their way to conquer North Africa.[1]

'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd continued the march towards North Africa, sending out his scouts in all directions, until his army reached the city of Subaytalah safely. There the two groups met, the Muslim army led by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd and the army of Jarjeer, the ruler of North Africa, whose army numbered around one hundred and twenty thousand. There was ongoing communication between the two commanders, and an exchange of messengers, in which the message of Islam was presented to Jarjeer and he was invited to enter Islam and submit to the command of Allâh, or pay the *jizyah* and accept Islamic rule. But all offers were refused and he and his troops persisted in their arrogance. Before long, battle broke out between the two groups and the fighting grew intense, until reinforcements arrived under the leadership of 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, at whose hands this arrogant tyrant met his end.[2]

When the Byzantines who were on the coast saw what had happened to Jarjeer and the people of Subaytalah, they got upset and gathered and consulted one another about fighting 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, but they were afraid of him. They wrote letters to him, offering to pay him something so that he would take his army and leave, and they would not attack him. According to some reports they send him three hundred *qintars* of gold, and according to others the sum was one hundred *qintars*, as *jizyah* each year so that the Muslims would leave them alone and depart from their land. He accepted that from them and took the money. One of the conditions of the treaty was that the Muslims would keep whatever they had acquired before the treaty took effect, but whatever they got after the treaty took effect would be returned to the people. 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr said to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd: It is going to be a long drawn-out affair with these people. They

[1] *al-Sharaf wa'l-Tasammi bi Harakat al-Fath al-Islami,* p. 191

[2] op. cit., p. 193; *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/158

could receive endless reinforcements and the country is theirs, whereas we are cut off from the Muslims and their lands. I think that tomorrow we should leave a good group of Muslim heroes ready in their tents and go and fight the Byzantines, and continue to fight until they grow tired, then when they go back to their tents and the Muslims go back, those Muslims who stayed in the tents and did not fight will still have the energy to go and take them by surprise, and perhaps Allâh will grant us victory over them. So he summoned some of the most prominent of the Sahâbah and consulted them, and they agreed to that. So the next day 'Abd-Allâh did what they had agreed to. All the Muslim heroes stayed in their tents with their horses at the ready, and the others went and fought the Byzantines until noon, fighting fiercely. When the adhân for Zuhr came, the Byzantines wanted to leave as was their wont, but Ibn az-Zubayr did not let them, and he persisted in fighting them until they were exhausted. Then he left and the Muslims left them, and both groups lay down their weapons because they were exhausted. At that point 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr took the Muslim heroes who had been resting and headed towards the Byzantines, who did not notice them until they were in their midst, attacking them as one with cries of *Allâhu Akbar*. The Byzantines were not able to put on their weapons and armour before the Muslims overpowered them, and Jarjeer was killed by Ibn az-Zubayr. The Byzantines were defeated and many of them were killed, and the daughter of Jarjeer was taken captive. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd went to the city and lay siege to it until it fell, and he saw in it wealth that did not exist in any other city. The share of each horseman was three thousand dinars and the share of each foot soldier was one thousand.

When 'Abd-Allâh conquered the city of Subaytalah, he sent his army to penetrate deeper into the country, and they reached Qafsah where they took prisoners and acquired booty. He sent troops to the fortress of al-Ajamm where the people of the region had barricaded themselves, and he lay siege to it and conquered it by making a deal with the people of North Africa, as we have seen above. 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr took the daughter of the king as

his share of the booty, and Ibn Sa'd sent him to 'Uthmân with the good news of the conquest of North Africa.[1]

The heroism of 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr in the conquest of North Africa

'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr ﷺ displayed a brave and heroic attitude which al-Hâfiz Ibn Katheer mentioned when he said: When the Muslims - who were twenty-thousand strong - set out for North Africa, led by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh, with 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar and 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr in his army, the Berber king Jarjeer confronted them with one hundred and twenty thousand men, or it was said, two hundred thousand. When the two groups approached one another, he ordered his troops to surround the Muslims, and the Muslims found themselves in a very bad situation, and had never seen anything more frightening than that.

'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr said: I looked at the king Jarjeer behind the ranks, and he was riding a horse, with two slave girls shading him with peacock fathers. I went to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh and asked him to send with me someone to guard my back whilst I headed towards the king. He sent with me a group of brave men and ordered them to guard my back, and I went and penetrated the ranks. They thought that I was bringing a message to the king, but when I got near to him he realized that I was up to no good, so he fled on his horse, but I caught up with him and struck him with my spear and finished him off with my sword, then I took his head and put it on my spear and said *takbeer*. When the Berbers saw that, they scattered and fled like birds, and were pursued by the Muslims who killed some and captured others, and took a huge amount of booty. That was in a land called Subaytalah, two days from al-Qayrawân.

Ibn Katheer said: This was the first incident by means of which 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr became famous, may Allâh be

[1] *al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 3/45, 46

pleased with him and his father and all the *Sahâbah*.[1]

What Ibn az-Zubayr did represents a kind of ambition to achieve high goals with a great deal of risk, without a gradual lead-up. At that time he was twenty-seven years old, and before that nothing is mentioned of him taking risky ventures with high aims. How could he undertake this huge risk which most ordinary people would think certain to end in death? What could have gone through the mind of this adventurer is one of two things:

1- That his attack would succeed and he would finish off the Berber king so that his troops would scatter, as was the habit of the kuffâr, and that would mean a decisive victory for the Muslims which would help them avoid the vicious battle that they feared

2- Or Allâh would accept him as a martyr, and that would be the fulfilment of his highest hopes and attainment of the highest status that the righteous could hope for, to attain which they were competing. It would also have the effect of instilling fear in the hearts of the kuffâr to a great extent, as they would expect all the Muslims to be that type of courageous people. It was sufficient bravery for this adventurer to throw himself into the midst of a fierce battle, for no one would take such a leap except the greatest of people who see that Paradise lies beyond that leap, for which they are longing. Ibn az-Zubayr made this leap, thinking nothing of this world and its burdens, hoping to attain the reward that Allâh has prepared for the *mujâhideen* who strive their utmost, whether they prevail over their enemies or attain martyrdom.[2]

In this report it states that after their king was slain, the Berbers fled from the Muslim army like birds, and the Muslims

---

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/158

[2] *at-Tareekh al-Islami*, 12/390

pursued them, killing some and taking others prisoners, without meeting much resistance. This report indicates that Allâh is with His believing friends and if they are sincere He will save them from hardship and spare them difficulties. The Muslims were faced with a major dilemma when they were surrounded by their enemies who outnumbered them by six to one, or more. The Muslims had to fight on all sides, which was something very difficult for such a small army that was surrounded by a huge number of enemies, as the narrator said: The Muslims were in the worst and most frightening position they had ever seen, but Allâh sent them this great hero who took this risk, and through him Allâh saved this Muslim army from the hardship it was going through.[1]

We should not forget the role of the other heroes who were with 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, guarding his back; they took part in the risky venture with him and even though history did not record their names, their courageous deed remains forever in our memories in this world and it fills the ummah with pride when it boasts of its heroes, and in the Hereafter they will get the reward that Allâh has promised to the sincere *mujâhideen*.[2]

The Muslims gave everything they had for the conquest of North Africa, and many of them were martyred. Among those who died during the campaign to North Africa at the time of 'Uthmân was Abu Dhu'ayb al-Hudhali, who was a famous poet.

The battle of Dhât al-Sawâri

The Byzantines were dealt a decisive blow in North Africa, and their coastlines were exposed to danger after the Islamic navy gained control of the Mediterranean coastline from Rhodes to Barqah. Constantine the son of Heraclius assembled the navy that he had previously built and set out with a thousand ships to avenge his continuous losses at sea. 'Uthmân ﷺ granted permission to confront the enemy, so Mu'âwiyah sent the ships

[1] op. cit., 12/392
[2] ibid.

of Syria under the leadership of Bisr ibn Artâh, and he met up with 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh, who was bringing the ships of Egypt. All of the ships came under his control, and the total number of ships was only two hundred. This Muslim army included the most courageous Muslim *mujâhideen* who had taken part in previous battles in which they had prevailed over the Byzantines. So in their minds the enemy was already broken and they had no fear of them, even though they had so few ships in comparison with the number of enemy ships. The Muslims set out by sea, and in their hearts they had only one objective, which was to support the religion of Allâh and break the resolve of the Byzantines. There were several reasons for this historical battle, including the following:

1- The strong blows that the Muslims had dealt to the Byzantines in North Africa.

2- The loss of control suffered by the Byzantines on their eastern and southern coastlines due to the Muslim navy's rise to dominance.

3- The Byzantines' fear that the Muslim navy would grow strong and think of attacking Constantinople itself.

4- Constantine the son of Heraclius wanted to regain the status of his kingdom after its successive losses on land and on the coasts of Syria, Egypt and Barqah.

5- The Byzantines wanted to engage in a battle the outcome of which they thought was guaranteed, so that they could retain control of the Mediterranean and keep hold of its islands, from which they could attack the Arab coastlines.

6- The Byzantines wanted to attempt to regain control of Alexandria, because of its importance to them. It has been proven historically that its inhabitants wrote letters

to Constantine the son of Heraclius, the king of Byzantium.

These are some of the reasons for the battle of Dhât al-Sawâri.[1]

Where did the battle take place?

This is a question for which the historians do not have a single answer. The Arab sources do not specify the precise location of the battle, except for one source - as far as we know.

- In *Fath Misr wa Akhbâruha*[2], the author mentions the speech given by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh, in which he said: I have heard that Heraclius is coming to you with a thousand ships; but he did not say where the battle took place.
- In his discussion of the year 31 AH, *at-Tabari*[3] made a connection between Dhât al-Sawâri and what the Muslims had done to the Byzantines in North Africa, and he said: The Byzantines came out with huge numbers (of ships) such as had never been seen before.
- *Al-Kâmil fi'l-Tareekh*[4] does not state where the battle took place either, but it does mention the reason as being due to what the Muslims had achieved in North Africa in particular.
- In *al-Bidâyah wa'l-Nihâyah*[5] it says: When 'Abd-Allah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh defeated the Franks and Berbers in North Africa, the Byzantines got angry and rallied behind Constantine the son of Heraclius, and they set out towards the Muslims in huge numbers, the like of which had never been seen since Islam began. They set out in

[1] *Dhât al-Sawâri* by Shawqi Abu Khaleel, p. 60, 61

[2] op. cit., p. 61

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/290

[4] *al-Kâmil fi'l-Tareekh*, 3/58

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/163

five hundred ships and headed towards 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd bn Abi'l-Sarh and the Muslims in the Maghreb.

- *Tareekh al-Umam al-Islamiyyah*[1] makes no mention of where the battle took place either.[2]

Dr. Shawqi Abu Khaleel thinks it most likely that the battle took place off the coast of Alexandria, for the following reasons:

- The book *al-Nujoom al-Zâhirah fi Mulook Misr wa'l-Qâhirah* clearly states that the battle of Dhât al-Sawâri took place on the sea, near Alexandria.[3]
- The *Tareekh* of Ibn Khuldoon[4] says: Then Ibn Abi'l-Sarh sent out detachments and they subjugated many lands, and they obeyed him and he went back to Egypt. When Ibn Abi'l-Sarh had achieved what he achieved in North Africa and gone back to Egypt, Constantine the son of Heraclius set out to attack Alexandria with six hundred ships.
- Although the Arab sources did not describe the precise location of the battle, they made a connection between this battle and the Byzantine losses in North Africa.
- The Byzantine navy had a long history and had been in control of the Mediterranean before Dhât al-Sawâri, so it was more audacious in attacking the Muslim coastlines. Hence Dr Shawqi Abu Khaleel thinks it most likely that the Byzantine navy came to the coast of Alexandria in order to regain it, because of its importance to the Byzantines and because its people had written to their previous ruler. By regaining Alexandria they would be able to destroy the new navy that the Arabs had started to build in Alexandria and nip it in the bud, thus regaining control over the waters and islands of the Mediterranean.

---

[1] *al-Shaykh al-Khudri*, 2/29

[2] *Dhât al-Sawâri*, p. 62

[3] *al-Nujoom al-Zâhirah*, 1/80

[4] *Tareekh Ibn Khuldoon*, 2/468

- The non-Arab sources knew Dhât al-Sawâri as the battle of Phoenix or Phoenicus (modern Finike), which was an outpost to the west of Alexandria, near the city of Marsi Matrooh. This is a precise definition of its location.[1]

Events of the battle

Mâlik ibn Aws ibn al-Hadathân said: I was with them at Dhât al-Sawâri. We met in battle on the sea, and we looked at their ships and had never seen anything like them. The wind was against us - i.e., it was in the favour of the Byzantine ships - so we dropped anchor for a while and they dropped anchor near us. Then the wind dropped, and we said to the Byzantines: Let us make peace between us and you. They said: We will give you that, and in return we want peace.[2] The Muslims also said to the Byzantines: If you wish, we will go to the coast and fight there until victory is decreed for one of us, or if you wish, we will fight on the sea. Mâlik ibn Aws said: They all shouted as one: No, on the sea. Thus it seemed to us that they were putting their trust in their naval experience and hoping for victory because of their skills and experience at sea, as they were used to it and its climate, so they hoped for a victory at sea, especially since they knew that the Muslims were new in this field.[3]

The two sides spent that night at sea, and the situation was very critical. The Muslim commander said to his companions: Advise me. They said: Wait for this night so that we can think about the matter and test our enemy. So the Muslims spent the night praying and calling upon Allâh - may He be glorified and exalted - remembering Him and praying *tahajjud*. Their voices sounded like the buzzing of bees, accompanied by the sound of the waves slapping the ships. As for the Byzantines, they spent the night ringing the bells on their ships. In the morning, Constantine wanted to rush to fight, but when 'Abd-Allâh ibn

---

[1] *Dhât al-Sawâri* by Shawqi Khaleel, p. 64

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/292

[3] *Dhât al-Sawâri,* p. 66

Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh had finished leading the Muslims in praying Fajr, he consulted his advisors and they agreed upon a brilliant plan. They decided to make the battle on land even though it was at sea. How did the Muslims achieve that? 'Abd-Allâh ordered his troops to get close to the enemy ships, so they drew so close that their ships were touching the enemy ships. Then some brave men leapt into the water and tied the Muslim ships to the Byzantine ships with thick ropes. So there were 1200 ships on the sea, every ten or twenty of which were joined together, as if it were a piece of land on which the battle would take place. Then 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd drew up the Muslim ranks on the edges of the ships, exhorting them and telling them to recite Qur'ân, especially Soorat al-Anfâl, because it speaks of unity, steadfastness and patience.[1]

The Byzantines started the fighting, and in their view victory was guaranteed when they said that they wanted to fight on the sea. They attacked the Muslim ships with hopes of victory and aiming to deliver a decisive blow and break the back of the Muslim navy. The Byzantines broke the ranks of the Muslims that were parallel to their ships, and the fighting became chaotic. It was hard on both sides, and blood flowed freely and coloured the surface of the sea, which turned red. Bodies toppled into the water, and the waves pushed the ships towards the shore. Many of the Muslims were killed, and so many of the Byzantines were slain that the Byzantine historian Theophanes said: This battle was a second Yarmook for the Byzantines.[2] Al-Tabari described it in the following terms: There was more blood than water in this battle.[3] The Byzantines tried to scuttle the ship of the Muslim commander 'Abd-Allah ibn Abi'l-Sarh, so that the Muslim troops would be left without a leader. A Byzantine ship approached his ship and threw ropes to Abd-Allâh's ship in order to tow it away and isolate it, but 'Ilqimah ibn Yazeed al-Ghutayfi saved the ship

[1] op. cit., p. 67

[2] *Dhât al-Sawâri*, p. 67

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/293

and the commander by throwing himself on to the ropes and cutting them with his sword.[1]

The Muslims stood firm despite everything, and they were patient as they usually were in their battles, and Allâh decreed victory for them because of their patience. So what was left of the Byzantine navy was defeated and the ruler Constantine himself almost fell into the hands of the Muslims - as Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam stated - but he managed to flee when he saw his forces collapsing and saw the bodies of his men floating in the water and the waves throwing them up onto the shore. He saw his navy that he had hoped would fare well and succeed in restoring his honour, sinking ship by ship. So he fled, wounded in body and broken of heart, overwhelmed with failure and frustration, and he reached the island of Sicily[2] , where the wind took him. His people asked him what had happened and he told them, and they said: Christianity and its men are destroyed! If the Muslims want to invade, they will not find anyone to repel them.[3] . So they killed him, but they let the others who were in the ships with him go.[4]

The outcome of Dhât al-Sawâri

1- Dhât al-Sawâri was the first decisive sea battle fought by the Muslims, in which the new navy demonstrated patience, faith, perseverance and sound thinking as the Muslims worked out a plan to make the battle difficult for their enemies, so that they would not be able to penetrate the Muslim ranks easily. The Muslims also used long iron hooks to bring down the masts and sails of the enemy ships, which led to disaster for the Byzantines.

2- Dhât al-Sawâri led to a turning-point in Byzantine policy

[1] *Dhât al-Sawâri*, p. 68

[2] *Tareekh Ibn Khuldoon*, 2/468

[3] op. cit., 2/468

[4] *Dhât al-Sawâri*, p. 68

towards the Muslims. They realized that their plans to regain their power or take back Syria and Egypt had failed, as the Muslims set out across this sea that had been a Roman lake, and the name "Roman Sea" ended forever. The Muslims conquered Cyprus, Crete, Corsica, Sardinia and the Balearic Islands, and they reached as far as Genoa and Marseilles.

3- Constantine was killed and was succeeded by Constantine IV, who was very young. This made circumstances suitable for the Muslims to undertake a land and sea campaign heading for the Byzantine capital Constantinople.

4- Spiritual preparation before battle - which is known as morale boosting nowadays - is of great value in achieving victory, as it focuses the heart sincerely on Allâh. Thus the believers spent the night in *tahajjud* and *dhikr*, seeking help from Allâh by His might and power, after making all the necessary preparations. Thus they met the enemy in high spirits, not fearing death, for Allâh is greater than all things. We are describing these battles and historical events in the manner of a prescription that is to be followed and implemented so that we may benefit from it in our own lives, for the life of the *Sahâbah* is no less than an example to be followed.[1]

5- The Mediterranean became an Islamic lake, and the Muslim navy became master of the Mediterranean. This navy was not established in order to impose its authority or dominance, rather its goal was to call people to Allâh and weaken the *mushrikeen*, and spread a culture that was based on the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ.

[1] *Dhât al-Sawâri*, p. 71, 72

6- The Muslims devoted themselves to studying the naval arts and ship-making, and methods of equipping ships with weapons and fighting on board ship, as well as the science of astronomy for the purpose of navigating by sea and working out the location of ships on naval maps later on. They invented the astrolabe (an astronomical compass) and developed it to such an extent that westerners such as Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci were able to make use of it in their explorations.

7- This battle was one of the manifestations of the superiority of strong, sound belief over military experience and superior equipment and numbers. The Byzantines had been seafarers since ancient times, with lengthy experience of naval warfare, whereas the Muslims were new to sea travel and naval battles. But Allâh caused the Muslims to prevail over them despite the advantages mentioned, because He had given these believers the mission of spreading His religion and making His word supreme on earth. It is worth pointing out the strength of the commander 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, and his steadfastness and ability to direct the fighting. This was all a kind of courage that the Muslims demonstrated, as they were willing to sacrifice themselves in order to make their religion prevail and advance the interests of their state.[1]

The most important lessons learned from the conquests of 'Uthmân

Fulfilment of Allâh's promise to the believers

Ibn Katheer said, speaking about 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ: Allâh caused many regions to be conquered at his hands, and the

[1] *at-Tareekh al-Islami,* 12/407

Islamic state expanded and the message of Islam travelled east and west. People were shown the confirmation of the words of Allâh:

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَمَا ٱسْتَخْلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى ٱرْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِى لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِى شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ﴾

"Allâh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely, give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh)" (An-Noor 24:55]

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُۥ بِٱلْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ ٱلْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلدِّينِ كُلِّهِۦ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾

"It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikoon (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh) hate (it)" (At-Tawbah 9:33)

And the words of the Prophet ﷺ:

«إِذَا هَلَكَ قَيْصَرُ فَلا قَيْصَرَ بَعْدَهُ، وَإِذَا هَلَكَ كِسْرَى فَلا كِسْرَى بَعْدَهُ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتُنْفَقَنَّ كُنُوزُهُمَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ»

"When (the kingdom of) Caesar is destroyed, there will be no Caesar after him, and when (the kingdom of) Chosroes has been destroyed, there will be no Chosroes after him. By the One in Whose hand is my soul, you will distribute their wealth for the sake of Allâh."[1]

All this came to pass at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ.[2]

Developments in the arts of war and politics

Wars used to break out between people for the sake of land that they wanted to control or because of aggression committed against a country or a tribe, but at the time of the Prophet ﷺ and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, wars began to be fought on the basis of principles. The Muslims wanted their beliefs to prevail on earth, but they found that they were up against deviant and corrupt beliefs such as the beliefs of the *mushrikeen* and Magians. But that was not the only reason for the development of the arts of war, rather we find a new kind of development, which was that the Muslim *mujaahideen* would offer options to their enemies: Islam or *jizyah* or fighting. From those conquests there emerged a brilliant policy with which all peoples were happy, except those who harboured a hatred of justice and equality among those who wanted to spread tribulation and rebellion; in some cases the Muslims had no choice but to be strict with these people and punish them severely.[3]

The beginning of compulsory conscription at the time of 'Umar and its continuation at the time of 'Uthmân

The Battle of al-Qaadisiyyah was one of the reasons why 'Umar took the decision to introduce compulsory conscription. He issued an order to his governors in all regions to summon every chivalrous horseman who had experience or owned a horse or weapon. If he came willingly, all well and good, otherwise he

[1] *Muslim, Kitaab al-Fitan,* 2918, 2919, *Al-Bukhari* (6629)

[2] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 7/216

[3] *'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Raaahideen,* by Dr. 'Abd al-Hameed Bakheet, p. 216

was to be brought by force. He told them to hasten to do that when he said: Do not leave anyone but send him to me, and do that right away.[1] 'Umar was thinking of conscription for the purpose of *jihad*. When he introduced the *diwaan* (record-keeping) and arranged annual stipends for the Muslims, his idea came to fruition and the introduction of the *diwaan* resulted in the introduction of official conscription, and stipends and salaries were allocated to the troops from the *bayt al-maal* of the Muslims. When 'Uthmân gave Mu'âwiyah permission to wage a campaign by sea, he told him to give the people the choice, so that no one would go on that type of campaign except willingly. But in the case of conscription for campaigns on land to complete the program of conquests, it remained compulsory during his reign for the regular soldiers who were receiving salaries.[2]

'Uthmân's concern about the borders of the Islamic state

The expansion of the Islamic state during the reign of 'Uthmân ﷺ led to a continued policy of fortifying and strengthening the borders so as to protect the Islamic state from enemy attack, whether by stationing troops on the borders or setting up defensive outposts. The first letter that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân wrote as caliph to tell the troops on the borders to protect the borders of the Islamic state was:

You are the guardians of the Muslims. 'Umar gave you stipends that we are aware of and which were decided in our presence. I do not want to hear of anyone among you changing his attitude lest Allâh change you and replace you with others. So see how you will be, for I will always take care of that with which Allâh has honoured me of responsibilities and duties.[3]

In order to make the administration run more smoothly, the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ put greater Syria, al-Jazeerah and the outposts under the authority of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, so that they

[1] *Itmam al-Wafa'*, p. 70

[2] *al-Nuzum al-Islamiyyah*, by Suhbi al-Saalih, p. 489

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/244

were under one administration. He told him to send a campaign against Shamshaat, with the option of delegating it to someone of whom he approved among the senior commanders who were experienced and courageous and wanted to fight in jihad against the Byzantines.[1] He also wrote to Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân, telling him to settle some people at the outpost of Antakyah (Antioch) and allocate some land to them, and he did that.[2] 'Uthmân ﷺ took an interest in the border posts and sent people to find out about the situation there.[3] When Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân invaded 'Amooriyyah, he found the fortresses there, between the outposts of Antioch and Tarsus, empty of Byzantine fighters, so he stationed some of the troops of greater Syria, al-Jazeerah and Qinnasreen there, and ordered them to stay there to guard his back whilst he withdrew from his campaign. Then one or two years later he sent Yazeed ibn al-Hurr al-'Absi there on a summer campaign[4] , and he ordered him to do the same thing. When the commanders entered the Byzantine lands on summer and winter campaigns they would do the same thing, as they left behind many troops when they departed from the land of the enemy.[5] Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân did very well in his administration and fortification of the Syrian coast.[6]

'Uthmân also wrote to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh, telling him to guard the post of Alexandria by keeping troops stationed there, and to pay them their salaries, and to rotate the troops so that they would not be harmed by being away from their wives for too long. He said to him: You know how concerned the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb was about Alexandria, and how the Byzantines broke the peace treaty twice, so keep troops stationed in Alexandria and pay them their

---

[1] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah fi'l-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah*, 2/466

[2] *Futooh al-Buldan*, by al-Balâdhuri, 1/175

[3] *al-Kharaaj wa Sinaa'at al-Kitaabah*, by Ibn Qudaamah, p. 413

[4] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah fi'l-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah*, 2/467

[5] ibid.

[6] ibid.

salaries, and rotate them every six months.[1] It was the habit of the commanders of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ, when the conquests progressed and they gained control of enemy fortresses, to refurbish them as previous commanders had done, then station Muslim troops there, as well creating new fortresses for defence. Among the fortresses that were refurbished by Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân were: the fortress of the Euphrates which is called Sumaysaat[2], Maltiyyah[3], Shamshaat and Kamakh[4] and Qaaleeqla[5]. These were fortresses that were taken over by the Muslims when they conquered Armenia during the reign of 'Uthmân ﷺ, and they refurbished them and stationed troops in them.[6]

In Qaaleeqla the commander Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri stationed two thousand men and allocated land to them.[7] The caliph 'Uthmân ordered the commander Habeeb ibn Maslamah to set up border posts in greater Syria and al-Jazeerah, and to run them and guard them.[8] When al-Bara' ibn 'Aazib ﷺ conquered the border region of Qizween, he installed five hundred Muslim troops there, appointed a commander over them and allocated to them land that did not belong to anyone, and they cultivated it, irrigated it and dug wells.[9] When Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas conquered Tumaysah[10], he stationed two thousand troops there and appointed a commander over them.[11] And there were many

[1] *Futooh Misr,* p. 192

[2] Sumaysaat: a city on the banks of the Euphrates on the edge of Byzantine territory to the west of the Euphrates.

[3] Maltiyah: one of the famous cities of the Byzantines adjacent to Syria, which belongs to the Muslims

[4] Kamakh: a Byzantine city one day's distance from Azerbaijan. *Mu'jam al-Buldaan,* 4/497

[5] Qaaleeqla: in greater Armenia near Khalaat and Manaazjarad

[6] *Tareekh al-Tahseenaat by Muhammad 'Abd al-Haadi, p. 434*

[7] *Futooh al-Buldaan,* 1/234

[8] op. cit., 1/241

[9] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah,* 2/469

[10] Tumaysah: an area in the plains of Tabaristan

[11] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah,* 2/469

more fortifications that were established on the borders during the reign of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ, and filled with troops to guard the borders of the Islamic state.[1]

In his administration, the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ paid attention to the matter of summer and winter campaigns, facilitating them every year. He appointed senior commanders and governors in charge of them, such as Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân ﷺ who built a bridge in Manbaj so that the troops of summer campaigns could cross over it where there had been no bridge before. And the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ gave his governor Mu'âwiyah permission to launch a campaign against the Byzantines and appoint whoever he wanted as commanders of the summer campaigns. So Mu'âwiyah appointed Sufyân ibn 'Awf who continued to lead the summer campaigns during the reign of 'Uthmân. The summer and winter campaigns were not limited to the land, rather they also took place on the sea at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ.[2]

Division of booty among the people of Syria and Iraq

Habeeb ibn Maslamah managed to defeat the Byzantines in Armenia before the reinforcements of al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah arrived from Kufah, and the people of Syria captured a great deal of booty. After the reinforcements from Kufah arrived, they differed concerning the matter of booty. Habeeb wrote to Mu'âwiyah about that, and Mu'âwiyah wrote to the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ telling him about that. 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ ruled that the people of Syria should give a share of that booty to the people of Iraq. When the letter of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân reached Habeeb ibn Maslamah, he read it to the Syrian troops and they said: We hear and obey the *ameer al-mu'mineen*. Then they gave a share to the Iraqi troops.[3]

Eagerness to be united when confronting the enemy

At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir appointed

[1] op. cit., 2/470

[2] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah*, 2/470

[3] *al-Futooh* by Ibn A'tham, 1/341, 342

Qays ibn al-Haytham al-Sulami in charge of Khorasan in his absence. When he (Qays) went out on campaign, (the enemy leader) Qaarin assembled a large horde from al-Tabaseen, Baadaghees, Herat and Qustahan, and he came with forty thousand troops. Qays ibn al-Haytham consulted 'Abd-Allâh ibn Khaazim, asking him: What do you think? He said: I think that you should leave the land, for I am its governor and I have a letter of appointment from Ibn 'Aamir; if there is war in Khorasan I am to be its governor. Then he produced a letter that he had forged. Qays did not want any trouble so he gave up authority to him.[1] By doing this, Qays ibn al-Haytham sought unity rather than division, lest the troops become confused or disheartened, which would lead to defeat. But the Muslims attained victory over their enemies, praise be to Allâh.[2]

Stipulating what the troops needed in peace treaties

At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ the Islamic conquests expanded, which led the commanders to stipulate in some of the peace treaties that some livestock, food and drink should be provided to meet the needs of the army for supplies and food, to help them in their conquests, so that they would not have the burden of carrying food supplies with them from their headquarters and they would not have to ask for them. Thus they would be more focused and more able to fight the enemy.[3]

Gathering intelligence about the enemy

The Islamic conquests continued during the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ. He paid a great deal of attention to news and actively sought it out himself.[4] His commanders followed the example of previous commanders by sending out spies and seeking news of the enemy.[5] One of the conditions stipulated in

[1] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah,* 1/189, quoting from Tareekh at-Tabari

[2] ibid.

[3] *Tareekh al-Ya'qoobi,* 2/166, 167

[4] *at-Tabaqaat,* 3/59

[5] *al-Idaarah al-'Askariyyah,* 1/403

the peace treaties was that the other side should be sincere in adhering to the treaty and alert the Muslims of any enemy movements towards them, and help them by means of spying and informing the Muslims of enemy movements.[1]

'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Rabee'ah al-Baahili, one of the leaders of conquest at the time of 'Uthmân

'Abd al-Rahmaan was a commander with high standards who was motivated by ideology. His strong adherence to his beliefs put him in a position of trust both with his commanders and the men under his control, in addition to his courage and knowledge of Islam. Thus he remained the commander and governor of the Baab al-Abwaab region from the death of Suraaqah ibn 'Amr until he was martyred, and he was never dismissed from his post despite the changes of caliphs and the changes of governors in Kufah, which was the centre to which 'Abd al-Rahmaan's reported. 'Abd al-Rahmaan believed in the noble chivalry of warfare, so he did not betray, deceive or strike from behind.[2] His good conduct in the Baab al-Abwaab region and the area south and west of the Khazar Sea led to security and stability in those regions, which were in the forefront of the spread of Islam and conquests to the north. Thus Islam became established in those remote areas in the face of different turmoils and ideologies fourteen hundred years ago, and it remains so until today.[3]

An example of his sublime attitude that is recorded in the pages of history is when he led the people out until they passed al-Baab, then the king Shahriyaar said to him: What do you intend to do? He said: I am heading for Balanjar and the Turks. He said: We would be happy if they stayed away from us, beyond al-Baab. 'Abd ar-Rahmaan said: But we will not be happy with them until we come to them in their own land. By Allâh, there are people

[1] ibid.

[2] *Qaadat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia*, p. 155

[3] op. cit., p. 156

with us who, if our leader gives us permission, would penetrate as far as al-Radm.[1] The king said: How is that? 'Abd ar-Rahmaan replied: They are people who accompanied the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and embraced this matter with sincerity. They were modest and noble during the *Jaahiliyyah* and their modesty and nobility increased. They will continue to be victorious and prevail over their enemies until they change.[2] 'Abd al-Rahmaan invaded Balanjar at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, and the Turks said: They would not have dared to attack us unless they had angels with them protecting them from death. So the Turks fled from him and he returned victorious, carrying booty after his cavalry had reached two hundred parasangs beyond Balanjar. They all came back and none of them was killed.[3] It is clear that the Muslims were in high spirits because of their successive victories and adherence to their religion, whereas the morale of the enemies they had fought was very low, because the Muslims had defeated the nations whom they fought. Hence the Turks fled before the Muslims and fortified themselves and no real fighting took place during this campaign and no martyrs fell among the Muslims.[4] 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Rabee'ah al-Baahili was very pious and of excellent character, and his dealings with the defeated peoples had an effect in establishing stability and security, and spreading Islam. He was very loyal and very trustworthy. The king of al-Baab had sent an envoy to the king of China with gifts - that was before the Muslims conquered his land - and his envoy returned after the Muslim conquest of that land, bearing gifts from the king of China among which was a valuable red ruby. When the envoy returned, the king of al-Baab was sitting with 'Abd al-Rahmaan. The king took that ruby from his envoy and handed it to 'Abd ar-Rahmaan, but 'Abd al-Rahmaan immediately returned it to him after

[1] al-Radm: it was said that this was the Great Wall of China

[2] *al-Kaamil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 3/29, 30; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/146

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 54/146

[4] *Qaadat al-Fath al-Islami fi* Armenia, p. 150

looking at it. The king was moved by this and said: This ruby is better than this city (meaning Baab al-Abwaab); by Allâh, you are dearer to me as rulers than the family of Chosroes. If I had been under their rule then they heard about this ruby, they would have taken it by force. By Allâh, no one could withstand you so long as you are honest and your great king is honest too.[1]

The king of the city of al-Baab and its environs was entitled to be astonished and amazed by the trustworthiness and honesty of the Muslim commander. This king had lived all his life in a vicious circle of betrayal and in a toxic atmosphere of treachery. When he saw the trustworthiness and absolute sincerity of the Muslims, he could not help but forget about his lost kingdom and the kings who had preceded him, and he expressed his feelings with words of admiration for this trustworthiness and honesty that came from the bottom of his heart.[2]

'Abd ar-Rahmaan knew that he had no personal right to take possession of this priceless ruby, and that the *bayt al-maal* of the Muslims also had no right to it. This ruby was the same as dust in his view. 'Abd ar-Rahmaan was noble, generous, chivalrous and pious, with a good knowledge of Islam. He owned no worldly goods despite the fact that he spent most of his life as a warrior and a governor. He was martyred in 32 AH in the region of Balanjar.[3] 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili is regarded as one of the leaders of conquest at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ; he was a companion of the Prophet ﷺ although he embraced Islam relatively late.

Salmaan ibn Rabee'ah al-Baahili, one of the leaders of conquest at the time of 'Uthmân

This Sahaabi was the first judge appointed in Kufah. 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ sent him to Kufah as judge before Shurayh. When Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqaas was appointed as governor of Kufah

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/148

[2] *Qaadat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia*, p. 154

[3] ibid.

the second time, at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, he also appointed Salmaan as a judge. He was present at al-Qaadisiyyah where he was also a judge, and he was a judge in al-Madaa'in. Not everyone was fit to be a judge, especially at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ, and not everyone was fit to be a judge of the people of Kufah, which at that time was crowded with prominent Arabs and senior Sahâbah on the one hand, and a mix of various nations, peoples and tribes on the other. This is indicative of Salmaan's abundant knowledge of Islam, and his righteousness, sense of justice, religious commitment, maturity, sound thinking and strong character, which earned him the confidence of all people. He was also in charge of dividing the booty after the conquest of al-Madaa'in and also during the campaign of al-Baab, which is indicative of his absolute fairness. He was a righteous man who performed *Hajj* every year. Some of the senior Taabi'een narrated (hadeeth) from him and he was a rare example of sound character, noble, generous, chivalrous, sincere and honest, a lover of good who loved for others what he loved for himself. He did not leave behind any money or property when he was martyred, after having lived his life as a *mujahid*, judge and governor.

He was superior to his peers in leadership qualities. When 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ sent a letter to al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah - his governor in Kufah - telling him to send reinforcements from Kufah to the people of Syria under the leadership of "a man of those whom you think are chivalrous, brave and committed to Islam", he did not hesitate for a moment to choose Salmaan for this dangerous mission. He chose him from among a large number of leaders of conquests who were with him or were in Kufah, because Salmaan was indeed a brilliant example of chivalry, strength and courage, in addition to his piety. He was brave and courageous, and quick to do chivalrous acts, and he was an expert in the arts of war because of his lengthy experience and he also had a great deal of experience in leading men. He was a skilled archer and he was also a expert horseman, and was in charge of looking after the horses for 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ. In every Muslim region, large numbers of horses were kept in

readiness for jihad; in Kufah alone there were four thousand horses. When the enemy attacked the Muslim borders, the Muslim *mujaahideen* would ride the horses and rush to fight them[1] , and Salmaan was in charge of the horses in Kufah.[2]

He was a brave horseman. Salmaan said: I killed a hundred fully-equipped soldiers with this sword of mine, all of whom worshipped something other than Allâh, and I did not kill a single one of them after taking him captive. He would even not kill his *kaafir* enemy who worshipped something other than Allâh on the battlefield before he warned him and then engaged in combat with him, then he would kill him when the opportunity arose in combat. So this killing was not like stabbing in the back or killing someone who was not able to defend himself (after capture).[3]

He was an example of the sincere *mujaahid* who seeks reward with Allâh, who strives in jihad so that the word of Allâh may be supreme, and who does not care in what way he is killed for the sake of Allâh. Finally he fell, drenched in his own blood, but his sword never fell from his hand. He is a fine example for every soldier, every commander, in his noble past and his great deeds.[4] He was martyred in 32 or 33 AH[5] ; may Allâh be pleased with him, the *faqeeh* and scholar of hadeeth, the just judge, the honest man, the effective administrator, the courageous horseman, the hero and martyr, the conquering commander Salmaan ibn Rabee'ah al-Baahili.[6]

Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri, one of the leaders of conquest at the time of 'Uthmân

Even though Habeeb was young, he moved from one battlefield to another, sometimes leading the conquest,

---

[1] *Qaadaat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia*, p. 169

[2] *Asad al-Ghaabah fi Ma'rifat al-Sahaabah*, 2/327

[3] *al-Istee'aab fi Ma'rifat al-*Ashaab, 2/633

[4] *Qaadaat al-Fath al-Islami fi Arm*enia, p. 170

[5] op. cit., p. 171

[6] op. cit., p. 172

sometimes bringing reinforcements. Victory was on his side in every battle in which he fought. He came to the Prophet ﷺ when he was in Madînah, wanting to fight, and at that time he was very young. He was present at Tabook under the leadership of the Prophet ﷺ. With this campaign his jihad began which lasted for nearly twenty years of his short life.[1] When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb saw that he was strong in body and in character, he put him to the test to see what kind of man he was. He showed him stores of wealth and stores of weapons, and he showed interest in the weapons and ignored the wealth, and preferring weapons to wealth is the characteristic of a commander in whom the love of military life is deeply-rooted. He was the commander of a squadron of cavalry in the decisive battle of al-Yarmook when he was only twenty-four years old, which indicates that his leadership abilities appeared early on, when he was still young. 'Umar ibn *al-Khattâb* ﷺ appointed him over the non-Arabs of al-Jazeerah as an administrator and a commander. It was not easy for 'Umar to appoint anybody to such a high position because 'Umar looked for certain characteristics in commanders that are rarely to be found in man. Finally, 'Umar ibn *al-Khattâb* ﷺ appointed him as governor of Armenia and Azerbaijan, which were vast and very important regions, because of the toughness of their people and their remoteness from the main bases of the Muslims and even their advance bases.[2]

He also acted as a commander and governor at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ. He was very brave and courageous. When he went to fight al-Muriyaan he had six thousand men under his command whereas al-Muriyaan had seventy thousand. Habeeb said to those who were with him: If they are steadfast and you are steadfast, you are more entitled to Allâh's support; if they are steadfast and you are not, then Allâh is with those who are patient. He met

---

[1] When he was appointed as governor and commander of the al-Jazeerah region he was 28 years old.

[2] He was appointed governor of Armenia and Azerbaijan when he was thirty-three years old.

them at night and said: O Allâh, make the moon shine upon us and keep the rain away from us, protect the blood of my companions and decree that they become martyrs. And Allâh granted him victory.[1] One of the reasons for his victory over his enemy - in addition to the faith factor - was that he attacked at night which caught the enemy unawares, and they panicked and fled.[2] He was a living example to his men of courage and bravery; he led his men from the front and would say to them: Follow me; and he did not remain in the rear, preferring to stay safe and sound. When he decided to attack al-Muriyaan at night, his wife heard him mention that and she said to him: Where will we meet? He said: In the courtyard of Muriyaan or in Paradise. Habeeb attacked his enemy at night, killing whoever got in his way, but when he reached the courtyard he found that his wife had got there before him.[3] But he was not the only hero who set an example for his men by his heroic deeds; his wife was also a hero whose example of sacrifice deserves to be followed.[4] He used to consult his men and listen to their opinions, and he did not take any decision before discussing it with them. Indeed, he would listen out for his soldiers' conversations so that he could find the right opinion and do what he thought was right, in addition to holding consultations before, during and after the battle. One day he heard one of his troops saying: If I was one of those whom Habeeb listens to, I would advise him to do something by means of which Allâh may grant us victory and a way out, *in sha Allâh.* Habeeb heard to what he said, then his companions said: What is your advice? He said: I would tell him to call for the cavalry and send them on ahead, then he could move on with his troops, following the cavalry, so the horses would reach the enemy in the middle of the night, and fighting would break out, then Habeeb and his troops would arrive at dawn, and they would think that reinforcements had arrived, so

[1] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asaakir,* 4/37

[2] *Qaadat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia,* p. 189

[3] ibid.

[4] ibid.

Allâh would cause them to be afraid, and their fear would lead to their defeat.[1] So Habeeb called out to the cavalry to set out on a moonlit rainy night, then he set out behind the cavalry, and he reached the enemy just before dawn. He and his companions attacked, and the enemy ran away, and they acquired a great deal of booty.[2]

Habeeb was crafty and smart; he would think and plan, then consult his troops and find out about the battlefield and obtain abundant information about the enemy, then he would base his battle plan on knowledge and insight.

The *jihad* of Habeeb was based on well-drafted plans, not just spontaneous ideas. Hence he was victorious even in the most dangerous battlefields. In addition to these characteristics and qualities, and indeed first and foremost, Habeeb was a true and sincere believer. When he met an enemy or besieged a fortress, he liked to say: There is no power and no strength except with Allâh ﷻ.[3]

Habeeb was a great leader, who combined the qualities of a great leader: a gifted nature, acquired knowledge, and practical experience[4] , as well as trust in Allâh ﷻ.

Habeeb ibn Maslamah offered the Islamic conquests unforgettable services, and he was undoubtedly one of the greatest leaders at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ. This great commander died in 42 AH; his age when he died was fifty-four years. His life was short in terms of number of years, but it was filled with many good deeds; although he lived only a short time, his life had an enduring effect that lasted down through the centuries. May Allâh be pleased with the great Sahaabi, the efficient administrator, the brilliant politician, the conquering commander, Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri.[5]

---

[1] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asaakir*, 4/37
[2] *Qaadat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia*, p. 190
[3] *Tahdheeb Ibn 'Asaakir*, 4/3
[4] *Qaadat al-Fath al-Islami fi Armenia*, p. 192
[5] op. cit., 187



The greatest achievement of 'Uthmân was uniting the *ummah* with a single *Mus-haf*

Stages in the writing down of the Holy Qur'ân

The first stage at the time of the Prophet ﷺ

It is definitely proven that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ enjoined the writing down of the Qur'ân that was revealed to him, and it is proven that he had a scribe or scribes who wrote down the *Wahy* (Revelation). Zayd ibn Thâbit acquired the nickname of *Kaatib al-Nabi* or Scribe of the Prophet ﷺ because he specialized in writing down the Revelation. Al-Bukhaari entitled a chapter in The Book of the Virtues of the Qur'ân (in his Saheeh): Chapter on the Scribes of the Prophet ﷺ, in which he quoted two hadeeths:

The first narrates that Abu Bakr ؓ said to Zayd: You used to write down the Revelation for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ...[1]

The second was narrated from al-Bara' who said: When the verse

﴿لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

[1] *al-Bukhaari, Kitaab Fadaa'il al-Qur'ân,* no. 4686

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home)..." (*An-Nisa'* 4:95)

was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ said:

«ادْعُ لِي زَيْدًا وَلْيَجِئْنِي بِاللَّوْحِ وَالدَّوَاةِ وَالْكَتِفِ، أَوِ الْكَتِفِ وَالدَّوَاةِ»

"Call Zayd for me, and let him bring the tablet and inkpot and (camel's) shoulder-blade, or the (camel's) shoulder-blade and inkpot."[1]

The Prophet ﷺ also used to have the Qur'ân written down in Makkah, before the Hijrah. One of those who wrote for him was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh, then he apostatized, then he became Muslim again in the year of the Conquest. That is a well known story that we have discussed elsewhere. It is well known that the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs were literate men, so perhaps they used to write down the Qur'ân in Makkah. Another indication that the Qur'ân was written down in Makkah is the story of how 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb became Muslim, when he entered upon his sister and she had a sheet in her hand on which Soorat Ta-Ha was written. Allâh has stated in the Qur'ân that it is compiled in pages, in the verse

﴿رَسُولٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ يَتْلُوا۟ صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً﴾

"A Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from Allâh, reciting (the Qur'ân) purified pages" (*Al-Bayyinah* 98:2).

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ died, the entire Qur'ân was written down, but it was not all put together in one place. It was written on palm leaves and flat stones, and was memorized in the hearts of men, but although it was preserved on pages and in people's hearts, Jibreel still reviewed the Qur'ân once every year,

[1] *al-Bukhaari, Kitaab Tafseer al-Qur'ân*, no. 4593, Ibn Abi Shaybah 4/232 (19511).

and he reviewed it with him twice in the year in which he died.[1] It may be that the Prophet ﷺ did not compile the Qur'ân in a *Mus-haf* because he was still expecting some abrogation of some of its rulings or recitation. When the revelation ended with his death, Allâh guided the Rightly-Guided Caliphs to do that, in fulfilment of His true promise to this ummah to protect it.[2]

The second stage at the time of Abu Bakr ﷺ

Among the Muslim martyrs who fell at al-Yamaamah were many of those who had memorized the Qur'ân. As a result of that, Abu Bakr, in consultation with 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, compiled the Qur'ân by collecting it from the skins, bones and palm leaves on which it was written, as well as from the hearts of men.[3] Abu Bakr gave this important mission to the great Sahaabi Zayd ibn Thâbit al-Ansâri ﷺ. Zayd ibn Thâbit ﷺ narrated: Abu Bakr ﷺ sent for me because so many had been killed at al-Yamaamah[4] , and I found 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb with him too. Abu Bakr said: 'Umar came to me and said: Too many of the reciters of the Qur'ân were killed on the day of al-Yamaamah, and I am afraid that many more reciters will be killed in other battles, and much of the Qur'ân will be lost. I think you should issue orders that the Qur'ân be compiled. I said to 'Umar: How can I do something that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not do?[5] 'Umar said: By Allâh, this is a good thing. He kept pushing the issue until Allâh opened my heart to that to which He had opened 'Umar's heart, and I thought of it as 'Umar did. Zayd said: Abu Bakr said: You are a wise young man, and we trust you.[6] You used to write down

---

[1] *al-Bukhaari, Kitaab Fadaa'il al-Qur'ân,* no. 4998

[2] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam wa'l-'Asr al-Raashidi,* p. 240, quoting from *Fath al-Baari*, 9/12

[3] *Huroob al-Riddah wa Bina' al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah,* by Ahmad Sa'eed, p. 145

[4] This is referring to the battle of al-Yamaamah against the liar Musaylimah and his supporters. (Author)

[5] This may be understood as meaning that he did not compile the Qur'ân in a *Mus-haf.* (Author)

[6] These are the qualities which made Zayd more suited than others for this task. (Author)

the Revelation for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, so seek out the Qur'ân and compile it.[1] Zayd said: By Allâh, if they had ordered me to move a mountain it would not have been a heavier burden than that which they ordered me to do of compiling the Qur'ân. I sought out the Qur'ân from the palm-leaves, flat rocks, men's hearts, animal skins and shoulder blades (on which it had been preserved), until I found the last part of Soorat at-Tawbah with Abu Khuzaymah al-Ansâri, and I did not find it with anyone else,

﴿لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

"Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from amongst yourselves. It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He (Muhammad ﷺ) is anxious over you; for the believers (he ﷺ is) full of pity, kind, and merciful" (*At-Tawbah* 9:128)

until the end of the soorah.

The pages were kept with Abu Bakr during his lifetime, until he died, then with 'Umar until he died, then with Hafsah bint 'Umar ﷺ.[2]

From this second stage of the compilation of the Qur'ân we may sum up the following:

(a) That the compilation of the Holy Qur'ân came about as the result of fear that it might be lost due to the deaths of many of the reciters during the *Riddah* wars (wars of apostasy). This indicates that the reciters and scholars at that time were in the forefront of taking action in jihad to support Islam and the Muslims with their ideas, conduct and swords, and they were the best nation ever brought forth for mankind, so all those who come after them should follow their example.

---

[1] i.e., from the things that were with me and with others. (Author)

[2] *al-Bukhaari*, no. 4986

(b) The compilation of the Qur'ân was based on the principle of *al-maslahah al-mursalah*. Nothing is more indicative of that than the words of 'Umar to Abu Bakr, when he asked him, How can we do something that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not do? 'Umar said: It is a good thing. In some reports it is narrated that he said: By Allâh it is a good thing and it is in the interests of the Muslims. This is the same answer that Abu Bakr gave to Zayd ibn Thâbit when he asked the same question. Whether the report which mentions the interests of the Muslims is sound or not, describing it as a good thing implies the same meaning, which is that the Muslims' best interests in compiling the Qur'ân was initially based on *al-maslahah al-mursalah*. Then there was consensus on this point after they all agreed to it by approving of it explicitly or by implication. This indicates that *al-maslahah al-mursalah* may used as the basis for consensus on shar'i rulings, as is established in the books of *usool al-fiqh* (basic principles of jurisprudence).

(c) This incident also shows us how the Sahâbah used to discuss matters in a calm atmosphere in which love and respect prevailed. Their aim was to achieve that which would serve the interests of all the Muslims, and they would adopt the correct view and open their hearts to it after discussing it and reaching the conclusions. Once they were convinced of the opinion, they would defend it as if it had been their own opinion from the outset. In this spirit it was possible to reach consensus about many rulings that were subject to *ijtihaad*.[1]

- **What were the basic qualifications that enabled Zayd ibn Thâbit to undertake this mission?**

Abu Bakr ﷺ chose Zayd ibn Thâbit for this important mission

[1] *al-Ijtihaad fi'l-Fiqh al-Islami*, by 'Abd al-Salaam al-Sulaymaani, p. 127

because he saw that he had the basic qualities for doing such a task, namely:

(a) He was young, as his age was 21 years, so he had the energy to do what was asked of him.

(b) He was more qualified, because he had more knowledge in addition to the wisdom that Allâh had bestowed upon him.

(c) He was trustworthy and was not under any kind of suspicion, so his work would be readily accepted by the people, as they had confidence in him.

(d) He had been a scribe of the Revelation, so he had prior experience in this field; he was not a stranger to this work.[1]

(e) In addition to that, he was one of the four who had compiled the Qur'ân at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. It was narrated that Qataadah said: I asked Anas ibn Maalik ﷺ: Who compiled the Qur'ân at the time of the Messenger ﷺ? He said: Four men, all of whom were from among the Ansâr: Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Mu'aadh ibn Jabal, Zayd ibn Thâbit, and Abu Zayd.[2] As for the method that Zayd followed in compiling the Qur'ân, he did not accept anything of the Qur'ân unless it had been written down in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and had been memorized by some of the Sahâbah. He would not accept memorization unless it had also been written down, lest there be some mistake or error in the memorization. Moreover, he did not accept anything that anyone brought unless he also had two witnesses who could testify that this written material had been

[1] *at-Tafawwuq wa'l-Najaabah 'ala Nahj as-Sahâbah* by Hamad al-'Ajami, p. 73

[2] *Siyar A'laam an-Nubala'*, by Imam al-Dhahabi, 2/431

written down in the presence of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and that it was one of the recitations in which the Qur'ân had been revealed.[1] Based on this method, Zayd ﷺ continued to compile the Qur'ân, checking it with precision and caution.[2]

- **The difference between that which was written at the time of the Prophet ﷺ and that which was written at the time of Abu Bakr**

The difference between that which was written at the time of the Prophet ﷺ and that which was written at the time of Abu Bakr is that the Qur'ân was written down at the time of the Prophet ﷺ but it was scattered on pages, tablets, palm-leaves, stones and other materials, and the soorahs were not all compiled in one place. As for that which was done at the time of Abu Bakr, the Qur'ân was written on pages with every soorah having its verses put in order, in pages that followed the order of the verses as they had memorized them from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. So the mission of Zayd ibn Thâbit was to write what had been written at the time of the Prophet ﷺ on pages, putting every soorah on a page with its verses in the order in which they had been revealed.[3]

The third stage in the compilation of the Qur'ân at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ

- **The motive for compiling the Qur'ân at the time of 'Uthmân**

It was narrated from Anas ibn Maalik that Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan came to 'Uthmân when he was on campaign with the people of Syria and the people of Iraq in the conquest of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Hudhayfah was very alarmed by the differences in their recitation, so Hudhayfah said to 'Uthmân: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, save this ummah before they differ concerning the

[1] *al-Tafawwuq wa'l-Najaabah 'ala Nahj as-Sahaabah*, p. 74

[2] *al-Inshiraah wa Raf' al-Deeq bi Seerat Abi Bakr al-Siddeeq*, by as-Sallaabi, p. 206

[3] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam wa'l-Asr al-Raashidi*, 2/241

Book as the Jews and the Christians did. 'Uthmân sent word to Hafsah saying, "Send us the manuscript so that we may make copies of it, then we will return it to you". So Hafsah sent it to 'Uthmân, and he ordered Zayd ibn Thâbit, 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn al-Haarith ibn Hishaam to make copies of it. 'Uthmân said to the three Qurashi men: "If you and Zayd ibn Thâbit differ concerning anything of the Qur'ân, then write it in the dialect of Quraysh, for it was revealed in their dialect". So they did that, until they had made many copies, then 'Uthmân returned the manuscript to Hafsah, and he sent a copied *Mus-haf* to every region and ordered that all other Qur'ânic material, whether it was manuscripts or entire copies, be burnt.[1]

We learn a number of things from this *saheeh hadeeth*, including the following:

(a) The reason that motivated 'Uthmân ﷺ to compile the Qur'ân, even though it had been compiled in the proper order in the manuscript of Abu Bakr, was the differences between the Muslim reciters in their recitations, which could have led to great confusion about the Book of Allâh, which is the basis of sharee'ah and the pillar of religion, the social, political, and moral foundation of the ummah. Some of them even said to one another, My recitation is better than yours. Hudhayfah was alarmed by that, and he hastened to speak of his concern to the caliph and leader of the Muslims, asking him to save the ummah before the differences among them went out of control and became very serious, and the Qur'ânic text got tampered with and distorted, as happened among the Jews and Christians where each community was divided against itself with regard to its Book.

(b) This saheeh hadeeth definitely states that the Holy

---

[1] *al-Bukhaari*, *Kitaab Fadaa'il al-Qur'ân*, no. 4987

Qur'ân was compiled in a manuscript that was put together and sewn with one thread. The ummah was unanimously agreed that what was in this manuscript was the Qur'ân as it had been received from the Prophet ﷺ the last time it was reviewed with Jibreel (A), and that this manuscript had remained in the care of the first caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq, then after him it passed into the care of the second caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb. Then when 'Umar knew he was dying, he did not appoint anyone in particular to become caliph after him, rather he left the matter to the shoora committee composed of people with whom the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was pleased when he died, and he left instructions for the manuscript to be kept with his daughter Hafsah, the Mother of the Believers ﵂. 'Uthmân relied on that manuscript when he compiled the Qur'ân, and from it he transcribed his "official" *Mus-haf*. He issued orders to four of the reciters among the Sahâbah who were famous for their precision in memorizing Qur'ân, their knowledge of the various recitations, their skill in reciting and their understanding of the Qur'ân and its language - three Qurashis and one Ansâri, who was Zayd ibn Thâbit, who had undertaken the first compilation at the time of Abu Bakr at the suggestion of 'Umar. According to some reports, the ones whom 'Uthmân ordered to write the Mus-haf were twelve men, among them Ubayy ibn Ka'b and others from among Quraysh and the Ansâr.[1]

(c) We may understand from this that the conquests at the time of 'Uthmân were undertaken with the permission and on the command of the caliph, and that military decision-making was done in Madînah, and the Islamic provinces were all subject to the command of the caliph

[1] *'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan,* by Saadiq 'Arjoon, p. 171

'Uthmân at that time. Rather there is evidence that there was consensus among the *Sahâbah* and Taabi'een in all regions, accepting 'Uthmân as caliph. The fact that Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman came to Madînah to sort out the issue of the people's dispute about the recitation of Qur'ân indicates that the major reference point for shar'i matters was consultation with the caliph in Madînah, and that Madînah was still the centre for the Sunnah and the place where the *fuqaha'* of the Sahâbah were concentrated.[1]

Consulting the *Sahâbah* with regard to the compilation of 'Uthmân

'Uthmân assembled the *Muhâjirîn* and *Ansâr* and consulted them about this matter, among whom were the prominent figures of the ummah and the leaders and scholars among the Sahâbah, at the head of whom was 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib ﷺ. 'Uthmân presented this issue for discussion to the elite of the ummah and its guided leaders, and they exchanged views and discussed the matter, until he was aware of their views and they were aware of his. They responded frankly to his views and left no room for doubt in Muslim hearts, and it was clear to people throughout the earth what was the conclusion of their meeting. No dissent was known at that time and no one objected to what they agreed to. The status of the Qur'ân is not something that could be hidden from an ordinary individual, let alone the scholars and imams.[2]

'Uthmân ﷺ did not introduce an innovation by compiling the Qur'ân, rather that had been done before him by Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq ﷺ. Similarly, it was not his own idea, rather he did it after consulting the Sahâbah (may Allâh be pleased with them), when they approved of this action and said: What a good idea. They also said: He did well (i.e., in what he did with regard to the *Mus-hafs*).[3]

---

[1] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam wa'l-'Asr al-Raashidi,* 2/244

[2] *'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan,* by Saadiq 'Arjoon, p. 175

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan,* 1/78

Mus'ab ibn Sa'd met the companions of the Prophet ﷺ when 'Uthmân burned the *mus-hafs*, and he saw that they approved of this action on his part.[1] 'Ali ﷺ rebuked anyone who criticized 'Uthmân for that and said: O people, do not go to extremes with regard to 'Uthmân, and do not say anything but good about him, for by Allâh he did not do what he did - with regard to the *Mus-hafs* - until after he had consulted all of us - i.e., the Sahâbah - and by Allâh, if I were the caliph I would have done what he has done.[2]

After this consensus of the part of these virtuous people who were among the best of creation on this blessed action, it becomes clear to everyone who is not influenced by whims and desires that every Muslim must approve of and accept this action done by 'Uthmân ﷺ, by means of which the Holy Qur'ân was preserved.[3]

Al-Qurtubi said in *al-Tafseer*: This action was done by 'Uthmân after he had assembled the *Muhâjirîn* and *Ansâr* and most of the prominent Muslims, and consulted them about that, and they agreed to compile it on the basis of what was proven to be sound of the well known recitation that was narrated from the Prophet ﷺ, and they dispensed with all others. They approved of his view, and it was the correct view.[4]

The difference between the compilation of Abu Bakr and the compilation of 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

Ibn at-Teen said: The difference between the compilation of Abu Bakr and the compilation of 'Uthmân is that the compilation of Abu Bakr came about because he was afraid that something of the Qur'ân might be lost with the loss of its bearers, because it had not been compiled in one place. So he compiled it in pages, with

---

[1] *at-Tareekh al-Sagheer* by al-Bukhaari, 1/94; its *isnâd* is hasan li ghayrihi (hasan because of corroborating evidence)

[2] *Fath al-Baari*, 9/18; its *isnâd* is hasan.

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan*, 1/78

[4] *al-Jaami' li Ahkaam al-Qur'ân*, 1/88

the verses of each soorah in the proper order, as dictated by the Prophet ﷺ. The compilation of 'Uthmân came about because of the variety in recitations, as each person read it in his own dialect, of which there were many. That led to each person saying that the others were wrong, and he was afraid that the matter would get out of control, so he had these manuscripts copied into a single *Mus-haf*, with the soorahs in order, and he adopted the dialect of Quraysh in exclusion to all others, on the grounds that it had been revealed in their dialect, even though that was room for reciting it in other dialects too, so as to ward off hardship from the beginning, as he saw that there was no longer any need for the variant readings, so he limited it to one dialect.

Al-Qaadi Abu Bakr al-Baaqilaani said: Abu Bakr did not aim to put the whole Qur'ân together between two covers, rather he aimed to unite them in following the proven recitations that were known from the Prophet ﷺ and cancel out all others. He forced them to adopt a *Mus-haf* in which there was no change in the order of verses and no commentary written alongside what had been revealed, and no abrogated verses written alongside what had not been abrogated, lest that lead to any corruption or confusion to those who came after them.

Al-Haarith al-Muhaasibi said: What is well known among the people is that the one who compiled the Qur'ân was 'Uthmân, but that is not the case; rather 'Uthmân made the people adhere to one recitation based on the choice made by him and those of the *Muhâjirîn* and *Ansâr* who were present, when there was the fear that fitnah might result from differences between the people of Iraq and Syria with regard to which dialect should be used when reading Qur'ân. But prior to that, the books containing Qur'ân were readable in all seven dialects in which the Qur'ân had been revealed. The first one to compile it was Abu Bakr, and 'Ali said: If I were to become caliph, I would adopt the *Mus-hafs* that were written at the time of 'Uthmân.[1]

[1] *'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan,* by Saadiq 'Arjoon, p. 178

Al-Qurtubi said: If it were said: Why did 'Uthmân compel all the people to adopt his *Mus-haf* when Abu Bakr had already done that and finished with it? The answer is that 'Uthmân did not intend to compile the *Mus-haf*; do you not see that he sent word to Hafsah saying: Send us the manuscript so that we may make copies of it, then we will return it to you. 'Uthmân only did that because the people had begun to differ in their recitation due to the Sahâbah spreading through different lands. The matter was only getting worse and the disputes about recitation were only becoming more intense. Everyone was adamant that his recitation was correct, and the incident took place between the people of Syria and Iraq, as was narrated by Hudhayfah ﷺ.[1]

Did the 'Uthmâni manuscripts contain all seven recitations?

Shaykh al-Muhaqqiq Saadiq 'Arjoon (ﷺ) was of the view that the manuscript of Abu Bakr, which was the original manuscript that was copied at the time of 'Uthmân according to Muslim consensus, did not contain all seven recitations in which the Qur'ân was revealed according to the saheeh hadeeth. Rather it was written according to one of them, which was the one in which the last review with Jibreel (A) took place, and the matter was settled at the end of the Prophet's life. The seven recitations were initially aimed at making things easy for the ummah, then that ruling ceased to apply when the Qur'ân became well-known and people of different dialects began to mix and their dialects began to resemble one another. Imam al-Tahhaawi said: Rather the dispensation for different dialects was granted because they were unable to recite in dialects other than their own, because they were illiterate and only a few of them knew how to read and write. Because it was so difficult for everyone who spoke a dialect to adapt to another dialect, allowances were made for different pronunciations so long as the meaning was close. They continued like that until the numbers of those who could read and write

[1] *al-Jaami' li Ahkaam al-Qur'ân*, 1/87

increased, and their dialects became identical to the dialect of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Thus they became able to memorize the proper pronunciation, and in that case it was not appropriate to recite it in any other way. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said: Thus it became clear that these seven recitations were only specific to a certain time due to necessity; when that necessity was no longer there, the ruling on these seven recitations no longer applied, and the Qur'ân is not to be recited except in one dialect.[1]

At-Tabari said: Recitation in seven dialects was not obligatory for the ummah, rather it was a concession that was granted to them. When the Sahâbah realized that the ummah would become divided unless they united and agreed on a single recitation, they agreed on that unanimously, and they were divinely protected from agreeing on misguidance.[2] This dialect in which these pages (at the time of Abu Bakr) were written, and on which there was definitive consensus, and in which the *Mus-haf* of 'Uthmân that was copied from them was written, include the seven recitations and others, which people used in their recitation and which were transmitted in *mutawaatir* reports from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, because the dialects mentioned in the hadeeth are different from these recitations.[3] Al-Qurtubi said: any of our scholars, such as al-Dawoodi, Ibn Abi Safrah and others said: These seven recitations that are attributed to these seven reciters are different from the seven dialects that were known at the time of the Sahâbah. Rather these recitations belong to one of these seven dialects which is the dialect in which the *Mus-haf* was compiled.[4] The most correct view in our opinion with regard to what we mean by the dialect is the view that it is the most eloquent and most famous of the dialects of the Arabs, namely the dialect of the Qur'ân. This is the view of al-Qaasim ibn Salaam and Ibn 'Atiyah among other prominent scholars.[5]

[1] *'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan* by Saadiq 'Arjoon, p. 180

[2] ibid.

[3] ibid.

[4] *al-Jaami' li Ahkaam il-Qur'ân*, 1/79

[5] *al-Itqaan* by al-Suyooti, 1/144-148

The number of *Mus-hafs* that 'Uthmân sent to the regions

When 'Uthmân finished having the *Mus-hafs* copied, he sent a *Mus-haf* to every region, and ordered them to burn every *Mus-haf* that was not in accordance with the *Mus-haf* that he sent out. They differed as to the number of *Mus-hafs* that were sent out to the different regions. It was said that there were four, and this is the view of the majority of scholars. And it was said that there were five, or six, or seven, or eight. As for the view that there were four, it was said that one was left in Madînah and the others were sent to Syria, Kufah and Basra. As for the view that there were five, it was said that one went to each of the places mentioned, and the fifth was sent to Makkah. As for the view that there were six, it was said that five were sent to the places mentioned, and they differed concerning the sixth; it was said that 'Uthmân kept it for himself, or that he sent it to Bahrain. As for the view that there were seven, six went to the places mentioned, and the seventh was sent to Yemen. As for the view that there were eight, seven were sent to the places mentioned, and the eighth was 'Uthmân's copy that he used to read, and it is the one that he was holding when he was killed.[1]

With each Mus-haf 'Uthmân ﷺ sent teachers to teach the people how to read it in accordance with the way it is written and in accordance with recitations that are narrated in sound, *mutawaatir* reports. 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Saa'ib went with the *Mus-haf* that went to Makkah; al-Mugheerah ibn Shihaab went with the *Mus-haf* that went to Syria; Abu 'Abd al-Rahmaan al-Sulami went with the *Mus-haf* that went to Kufah; 'Aamir ibn Qays went with the *Mus-haf* that went to Basra, and 'Uthmân told Zayd ibn Thâbit to teach the people using the *Mus-haf* that remained in Madînah.[2]

---

[1] *Adwa' al-Bayaan fi Tareekh al-Qur'ân,* p. 77

[2] op. cit., p. 78

The attitude of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood towards the *Mus-haf* of 'Uthmân

There is no evidence that Ibn Mas'ood ﷺ differed with 'Uthmân concerning that. All that was narrated concerning that have *da'eef* (weak) *isnaad*, and these weak reports which mention that prove that Ibn Mas'ood came back to what the Sahâbah had agreed on with regard to compilation of the Qur'ân; he stood up before the people and announced that, and told them to come back to the consensus of the Muslims on this issue.[1] He said: Allâh does not take away knowledge in any physical sense, rather He takes it away when the scholars die, and Allâh will not cause the ummah of Muhammad ﷺ to unite on misguidance, so join them and agree with whatever they are agreed upon, for the truth is in that on which they are unanimously agreed. And he wrote to 'Uthmân saying that.[2] It was narrated from Ibn Katheer that Ibn Mas'ood came to agree (with the consensus)[3] and al-Dhahabi confirmed that, saying: It was narrated that Ibn Mas'ood agreed and followed 'Uthmân, praise be to Allâh.[4] No attention should be paid to that which was written by Taha Hussein about the issue of the *Mus-haf* and the relationship of 'Uthmân with Ibn Mas'ood, which he quoted in an obnoxious manner, with ideas that he took from his Orientalist professors[5] , who based their views on weak reports and Raafidi reports to distort the image of the decent relationships that the *Sahâbah* had with one another, may Allâh be pleased with them all.

Could it be expected that Ibn Mas'ood, who stopped offering prayers in shortened form in Mina for fear of dissent and fitnah, and in order to follow the caliph, would ascend the minbar and

---

[1] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan*, 1/78

[2] op. cit., 1/79

[3] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/228

[4] *Siyar A'laam an-Nubala'*, 1/349

[5] *al-Fitnah al-Kubra*, 1/159

incite people to dissent, when he is the one who said: Dissent is evil?[1]

The Raafidi historians fabricated reports and attributed them to Ibn Mas'ood and his attitude towards 'Uthmân (ﷺ), and through these lies they showed the Sahâbah as people who fought, disputed and hated one another, stubborn people who engaged in foul speech. These are weak reports that cannot stand up to any calm and objective examination; they are despicable and unbelievable. The Raafidis falsely claimed that Ibn Mas'ood used to criticize 'Uthmân and regard him as a kaafir, and when 'Uthmân became caliph he had him beaten to death. But this is an obvious lie against Ibn Mas'ood, because the scholars of hadeeth know that Ibn Mas'ood never declared 'Uthmân to be a kaafir, rather when allegiance *(bay'ah)* was sworn to 'Uthmân, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood travelled from Madînah to Kufah, and when he reached it, he praised Allâh then he said: The *ameer al=mu'mineen* 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb has died and we have never seen any day sadder than that day. We, the companions of Muhammad, got together and chose the best of us, and we swore allegiance to *ameer al=mu'mineen* 'Uthmân, so swear allegiance to him.[2] These clear words offer the strongest evidence of the high esteem in which 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was held by Ibn Mas'ood and all the Sahâbah, those whom Allâh praised and was pleased with, who were the best ones to understand the words of Allâh:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُوا۟ قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا﴾

"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth" (*Al-Ahzaab* 33:70).

This statement of 'Abd-Allâh was the truth and nothing but the truth, as it was based on conviction and spoken willingly; it was not said out of fear and he did not say cheap words just to cheat or deceive, or to acquire a position under the new caliphate.

---

[1] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood*, by 'Abd al-Sattaar al-Shaykh, p. 335

[2] *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd*, 6/63

So it is clear that there was no hatred or resentment in the heart of either of them towards the other. If anything happened, it was only for the sake of clarifying the truth and for the best interests of the Muslims[1] , and that only happened within the guidelines of offering sincere advice and with the appropriate etiquette, or of the caliph disciplining his people. As for the claims made by the Raafidis and those who follow them, that 'Uthmân had Ibn Mas'ood beaten to death, that is a lie according to scholarly consensus. Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi said: As for his beating Ibn Mas'ood and withholding his stipend, this is a lie.[2] The Raafidis have no justification for attacking 'Uthmân with this story about Ibn Mas'ood, because he did not have him beaten or withhold his stipend, rather he acknowledged his status, and Ibn Mas'ood was deeply committed to obeying his ruler to whom he had sworn allegiance, and he believed that he was the best of the Muslims at the time of swearing allegiance.[3]

The *Sahâbah's* understanding of the verses which forbid dissent

Allâh says:

﴿وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطِي مُسۡتَقِيمٗا فَٱتَّبِعُوهُۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُواْ ٱلسُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمۡ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ وَصَّىٰكُم بِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

"And verily, this is My straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His path. This He has ordained for you that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious" (*Al-An'aam* 6:153)

The straight path is the Qur'ân, Islam and the sound human nature *(fitrah)* with which Allâh created mankind, and the (other) paths are whims and desires, division, innovation and newly-

[1] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood,* p. 324

[2] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim,* p. 63

[3] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah fi'l-Sahâbah al-Kiraam,* 3/1066

introduced matters. Mujaahid said: "and follow not (other) paths" means innovations, specious arguments and misguidance.[1]

Allâh forbade to this ummah that which the previous nations had fallen into of dissent and division after proof had come to them and Allâh had revealed the Book to them. Allâh says:

﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا۟ وَٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْبَيِّنَـٰتُ ۚ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

"And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment" (*Al 'Imraan* 3:105)

He forbade the members of the ummah to be like the mushrikeen who split up their religion and became sects, as He says:

﴿فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَـٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ○ مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَٱتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ○ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍۭ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ﴾

"So set you (O Muhammad ﷺ) your face towards the religion (of pure Islamic Monotheism) Haneef (worship none but Allâh Alone). Allâh's Fitrah (i.e. Allâh's Islamic Monotheism) with which He has created mankind. No change let there be in Khalq-illaah (i.e. the religion of Allâh f Islamic Monotheism), that is the straight religion, but most of men know not.[2] *(Tafsir At-Tabarî) (And remain always) turning in repentance to Him (only), and be afraid and dutiful to Him; and perform As-Salaah (Iqaamat-as-Salaah) and be not of Al-Mushrikoon (the*

---

[1] *Tafseer Mujaahid,* p. 227

[2] (V.30:30) See the footnote of (V.10:19).] *(Tafsir At-Tabarî)*

polytheists, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh) Of those who split up their religion (i.e. who left the true Islamic Monotheism), and became sects, [i.e. they invented new things in the religion (Bid'ah), and followed their vain desires], each sect rejoicing in that which is with it" (*Ar-Room* 30:30-32)

Allâh tells us that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ has nothing to do with those who split their religion and become sects and factions.[1] Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا لَّسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ ۚ إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ﴾

"Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kinds of religious sects),[2] you (O Muhammad ﷺ) have no concern in them in the least. Their affair is only with Allâh, Who then will tell them what they used to do" (*Al-An'aam* 6:159)

From the story of the compilation of the Qur'ân at the time of 'Uthmân, we can clearly see the extent of the Sahâbah's understanding of the verses that forbid dissent, as Allâh forbade dissent and warned against it. Because of their deep understanding of these verses, Hudhayfah ﷺ was alarmed when

---

[1] *Diraasaat fi'l-Ahwa' wa'l-Firaq wa'l-Bida'*, by Naasir al-'Aql, p. 49

[2] (V.6:159) It is said that the Prophet ﷺ recited this Verse and said: "These people are those who invent new things (*Bid'ah*) in religion and the followers of the vain desires of this Muslim nation, and their repentance will not be accepted by Allâh." (*Tafsir Al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 7).

[It has been narrated in the *Hadîth* Books (*At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mâjah and Abu Dâwûd*) that the Prophet ﷺ said: "The Jews and the Christians will be divided into seventy-one or seventy-two religious sects and this nation will be divided into seventy-three religious sects, all in Hell, except one, and that one is: on which I and my Companions are today, i.e. following the Qur'ân and the Prophet's *Sunnah* (legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements)."]

he noticed signs of dissent in their recitation of Qur'ân, and he went straight to Madînah and told 'Uthmân ﷺ of what he had seen and heard; 'Uthmân hastened to address the people and warn them of the consequences of this dissent, and he consulted the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) about the solution to this problem which had started to appear. Within a short period of time he put an end to the problem and closed the door to the dissent which had almost arisen by compiling the manuscript and copying it into a single *Mus-haf* from the most trustworthy sources. With the closing of this door to *fitnah*, the Muslims rejoiced whilst the hypocrites who had been cheered by signs of dissent for which they had been waiting patiently and striving to achieve, were upset. When the problem was solved, and they could not find any way to stir up this dispute again, their resentment against 'Uthmân increased and they strove to criticize him and present his good deeds as bad, and they resorted to arguments that were as weak as a spider's web to criticize him and justify their rebellion against him, trying to tell the people that this good deed was bad and meant that the people should rebel against him.[1]

The *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) did not leave every reciter to his own devices even if his recitation was correct; rather they united them in following one recitation. This is an important lesson which inspires us to study the history of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs which is full of lessons and examples.[2]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«إِنَّ اللهَ يَرْضَى لَكُمْ ثَلَاثًا : أَن تَعْبُدُوهُ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ، وَأَنْ تَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ، وَأَنْ تُنَاصِحُوا مَنْ وَلَّاهُ اللهُ أَمْرَكُمْ»

"Allâh loves three things for you : that you should worship Him and not associate anything with Him, that you should hold fast,

[1] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan,* 1/82
[2] op. cit., 1/83

all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh (i.e. this Qur'ân), and be not divided among yourselves (cf. Aal 'Imraan 3:103); and that you should be sincere to the one whom Allâh appoints in charge of your affairs."[1]

The way of adhering to the rope of Allâh is adhering to the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ. Ibn Taymiyah said: This is one of the most basic principles of this great religion of Islam, which Allâh emphasized greatly in His Book and criticized those who abandoned it among the people of the Book and others. It was also enjoined emphatically by the Prophet ﷺ in both public and private gatherings.[2] Hence Allâh, may He be exalted, and His Messenger ﷺ enjoined all that could preserve unity and harmony among the Muslims, and forbade everything that could undermine this great principle.

The division, mutual forsaking and fighting that occurred among the Muslims came about as the result of not paying enough attention to this principle and its guidelines, which resulted in division and lack of unity; thus they became sects and parties, each sect rejoicing in that which is with it.[3]

Unity of the Muslims is required by sharee'ah, and is one of the great aims of sharee'ah; in fact it is one of the most important means of supporting the religion of Allâh, may He be exalted, and prevailing over our enemies. We are enjoined to come together in mutual teaching of the truth and mutual enjoining of patience, so it is essential that the efforts of daa'iyahs, leaders of Islamic movements, Muslim scholars and seekers of knowledge be united so as to reconcile Muslims in a real sense, not just superficially, because half-baked solutions do more damage than good. Shaykh 'Abd ar-Rahmaan al-Sa'di (ﷺ) said: Jihad is of two types; the first type is *jihad* that is aimed at setting straight the affairs of the Muslims with regard to their beliefs, attitudes and etiquette, and

[1] *Musnad Ahmad*, 1/2, 26, 2/367

[2] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa*, 22/359

[3] *Tabseer al-Mu'mineen fi Fiqh al-Nasr wa'l-Tamkeen by al-Sallaabi*, p. 307

all their religious and worldly affairs, and educating them; this type is the essence of true *jihad* and the basis for the second type, which is *jihad* that is aimed at warding off aggressors who seek to attack Islam and the Muslims, whether they are kuffaar, hypocrites, heretics or any other enemies of the faith. These two types - *jihad* of proof and argument, and *jihad* with weapons, are appropriate at all times and in all places.[1] Then he wrote a chapter entitled: Jihad that has to do with establishing unity among the Muslims.[2] After quoting the verses and ahaadeeth that indicate that it is obligatory for the Muslims to be united, he said: The greatest form of *jihad* is striving to achieve this principle of uniting the Muslims in following their religion and pursuing their spiritual and worldly interests.[3]

Hence we think that adopting the means that will lead to uniting the Muslims is one of the greatest forms of *jihad*, because this is a very important step towards making the Muslims prevail, establishing the Islamic state and bringing about sharee'ah rule. This was the understanding of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, which was demonstrated in the most elegant form when 'Uthmân united the ummah in following one *Mus-haf*.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Wujoob at-Ta'aawaun bayna al-Muslimeen* by al-Sa'di, p. 5

[2] ibid.

[3] ibid.



Chapter 5

Governors at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ

Regions of the Islamic state at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ and his policy with regard to governors

Makkah al-Mukarramah

When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ died, his governor in Makkah was Khâlid ibn al-'Aas ibn Hishâm ibn al-Mugheerah al-Makhzoomi.[1] 'Uthmân left him in this position for a time the length of which is difficult to determine, then he dismissed him, but there are no reports that mention the reason for that. It is also difficult to determine the most important of his actions. After dismissing him, 'Uthmân appointed 'Ali ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza as governor, then after that 'Uthmân appointed a number of governors over Makkah, but it is difficult to determine the length of their posts. Among them was 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr al-Hadrami, who was one of 'Uthmân's governors

[1] *Tajreed Asma' as-Sahâbah*, by Imam al-Dhahabi, p. 151

in Makkah. The texts also confirm that 'Uthmân ﷺ appointed Khâlid ibn al-'Aas ibn Hishâm as governor of Makkah a second time, and some sources state that when 'Uthmân died, Khâlid was governor of Makkah, then 'Ali dismissed him and appointed someone else.[1] This report appears to be the strongest of the reports that say that 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Hadrami was the governor of Makkah at the time when 'Uthmân was killed.[2] At the time of 'Uthmân Makkah enjoyed stability and calm despite the events of fitnah that took place in other regions at the end of 'Uthmân's reign.[3]

al-Madînah al-Munawwarah

al-Madînah al-Munawwarah is regarded as one of the most important Islamic cities at the time of 'Uthmân, as it was the centre of the caliphate and delegations came there from various regions, and it was also a military centre. Many of the senior *Sahâbah* lived there, Muhâjireen and Ansâr alike, thus it was of particular importance. Because of his position as caliph, 'Uthmân lived there and was able to check on it; he even used to ask about the prices of food and about how the people were.[4] When 'Uthmân travelled for Hajj he would appoint one of the Sahâbah in charge of Madînah in his absence until he returned, and he often appointed Zayd ibn Thâbit ﷺ.[5] In Madînah there was a *bayt al-mâl* and a diwan to keep records of stipends, as in other cities. Al-Madînah was regarded as one of the quietest and calmest of cities during the time of 'Uthmân, apart from what happened during his last days of turmoil after the rebel armies came and besieged 'Uthmân, and some of the senior Sahâbah left the city.[6]

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen,* by Dr. 'Abd-Allâh al-'Umari, 1/166

[2] *Nihâyat al-Irb fi Funoon al-Adab* by al-Nuwayri, 2/72

[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/167

[4] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* 3/961, 962

[5] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/168, 169

[6] op. cit., 1/169

al-Bahrain and al-Yamâmah[1]

When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ died, 'Uthmân ibn Abi'l-'Aas al-Thaqafi was governor of Bahrain, and 'Uthmân let him continue in this post for a while. The reports indicate that 'Uthmân ibn Abi'l-'Aas remained the governor of Bahrain for three years after he swore allegiance to 'Uthmân, i.e. in 27 AH, based on the fact that he and his army took part with the army of Basra in some of the conquests.[2] It seems that the cooperation between the province of al-Bahrain and the province of Basra that began during the time of 'Umar grew stronger at the time of 'Uthmân, especially after 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz was appointed governor of Basra[3] , as the governor of al-Bahrain became one of the commanders under the leadership of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir the governor of Basra. The historical texts also show that the province of Bahrain came under the authority of Basra - to some extent - and became part of it, so that Ibn 'Aamir was the one who appointed agents for Bahrain.[4] One researcher confirms that this cooperation took place, as he says: At the time of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, Bahrain was joined to Basra when the later became the base for the conquests of Persia and southern Iran, and its governors became answerable to the governor of Basra. He reinforced and strengthened this connection between Basra and Bahrain.[5] Other governors whom 'Uthmân appointed over Bahrain included Marwân ibn al-Hakam and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Suwâr al-'Abdi. When 'Uthmân died, 'Abd-Allâh was governor of Bahrain.[6] At the time of

---

[1] al-Bahrain was a name given to the area which includes the Emirates of the Arabian Gulf and the eastern park of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia apart from Kuwait. Al-Yamâmah was in the land of al-Najd.

[2] *Tareekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, p. 159; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/169

[3] *at-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 5/44

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/169

[5] *al-Bahrain fi Sadr al-Islam*, by 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn al-Najm, p. 141

[6] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/170

'Uthmân, Bahrain played a major role in those conquests.[1]

The situation in Bahrain remained stable until the death of 'Uthmân. As for al-Yamâmah, at the time of 'Umar ﷺ it was part of the province of Bahrain and Oman to a large extent, and the governor of Bahrain was the one who sometimes appointed its governors. But at the time of 'Uthmân, it seems that the governors of al-Yamâmah were appointed directly by 'Uthmân. It is also mentioned with regard to the turmoil that followed the killing of 'Uthmân, as some letters arrived at the time from people who were angry at the killing of 'Uthmân.[2]

Yemen and Hadramawt

When 'Umar ﷺ died, his governor in Yemen was Ya'la ibn Munayyah, who was on his way to Madînah at 'Umar's request, when a letter reached him from 'Uthmân telling him of the death of 'Umar and of the people's swearing allegiance to 'Uthmân, and informing him that 'Uthmân was appointing him as governor of San'â'. Thus he remained governor of San'â' until 'Uthmân ﷺ died.[3] The governor of (the city of) al-Jund was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Rabee'ah, and he remained its governor throughout the reign of 'Uthmân ﷺ.[4] It seems that there were other governors throughout the rest of Yemen, but the main sources focus primarily on these two governors. Similarly, the sources do not speak in detail about events in Yemen during the time of 'Uthmân, and they are not frequently mentioned in the correspondence between 'Uthmân and his governors in Yemen apart from what he mentioned in general instructions sent to all his governors.[5] The people of Yemen were well-known at the time of 'Uthmân for their obedience to their governors, as is indicated in the report which says that 'Uthmân ﷺ sent a Thaqafi

[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/442

[4] *Tareekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, p. 179

[5] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/171

man to Yemen, and when he returned, 'Uthmân asked him about its people and he said: I saw a people who were never asked for anything but they gave, whether it was right or wrong.[1]

It is well known that numerous Yemeni tribes migrated during the conquests at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb to the new Islamic regions in Iraq, Egypt and Syria. So the connections between Yemen and its people in other regions lasted throughout the reign of 'Uthmân. We find that some of the Jews of Yemen played a major role in stirring up the *fitnah* that began at the end of 'Uthmân's reign, when 'Uthmân ﷺ was martyred. Chief among those who were involved in the fitnah was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'. After the murder of 'Uthmân, a number of its governors left Yemen and came to the Hijaz to take part in the events happening there, including Ya'la ibn Munayyah and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Rabee'ah.[2]

The province of Syria

When 'Uthmân became caliph, Mu'âwiyah ﷺ was governor of most of Syria, and 'Uthmân ﷺ approved of his position[3] as he approved of others in provinces such as Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt and elsewhere. Some developments occurred and Mu'âwiyah added some other areas until he became the absolute governor of all of (greater) Syria, and became the strongest of all of 'Uthmân's governors. At the beginning of 'Uthmân's caliphate there were other governors, including 'Umayr ibn Sa'd al-Ansâri, who was governor of Homs, who competed with Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân for status before 'Uthmân ﷺ, but 'Umayr fell sick and was too ill to continue his gubernatorial duties, so he asked the caliph 'Uthmân to relieve him of his duties, which he did, and gave his province to Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân. Thus Mu'âwiyah's authority spread and extended to Homs which had previously

[1] *Tareekh al-Yemen al-Siyâsi fi'l-'Asr al-Islami*, by Hasan Sulaymân, p. 79

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/442

[3] *Tareekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, p. 155

been governed by 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Khâlid ibn al-Waleed.[1] When 'Alqamah ibn Mahraz - who had been governor of Palestine - died, 'Uthmân added his province to the province of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân ﷺ, so all of (greater) Syria came under Mu'âwiyah's control two years after 'Uthmân ﷺ became caliph, and he remained absolute governor of the religion for the rest of 'Uthmân's caliphate, until 'Uthmân died, as is well known.[2] The period of Mu'âwiyah's governorship of Syria was filled with events, as Syria was one of the most important theatres of *jihad*. Even though Syria became internally stable, and Islam prevailed therein, and the Byzantines ceased trying to stir up trouble there, Syria was still adjacent to the Byzantine lands, so the way was open for Mu'âwiyah to engage in *jihad* in that direction, as we have discussed above. Mu'âwiyah carried political weight in the Islamic state at the end of 'Uthmân's caliphate, as he was one of the governors whom 'Uthmân summoned to consult with them when signs of *fitnah* began to loom on the horizon, and he expressed his own opinions to 'Uthmân in this gathering[3] , as we shall see below, in sha Allâh.

Armenia

The Islamic armies began to head to Armenia for the first time during the reign of 'Uthmân ﷺ, and the first Muslim army headed to that region from Syria, which was one of the closest provinces, consisting of eight thousand warriors led by Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri. This army was able to conquer many areas of Armenia, but it faced danger due to the large numbers of Byzantines who gathered to support the Armenians in their wars against the Muslims. He asked the caliph for help, and the caliph ordered an army of six thousand men, led by Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili[4] , to march from Kufah. After that a dispute

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/442

[2] op. cit., 5/443

[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/176

[4] *al-Tabaqât*, 6/131

arose between Habeeb ibn Maslamah and Salmân ibn Rabee'ah and when 'Uthmân found out about it, he wrote to the people and solved the problem between them.[1] It seems that Salmân ibn Rabee'ah took over command of the Muslim armies when 'Uthmân wrote to him appointing him as governor of Armenia[2] , then Salmân ibn Rabee'ah penetrated into Armenia as far as the land of al-Khazar[3] , attaining conquests and victories until there was a fierce battle between his army of ten thousand men and the army of the Khazar king, which was three hundred thousand strong - as the reports say - and Salmân and all his troops were killed. 'Uthmân ﷺ wrote to Habeeb ibn Maslamah, telling him to march again to Armenia and conquer it; he set out with his army and conquered one place after another and established the Muslim presence there, and he made some treaties with the local people.[4] Then 'Uthmân decided to send him to the border posts in al-Jazeerah because of his experience and abilities, and he appointed Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamân as governor of Armenia in his stead, in addition to his post as governor of Azerbaijan. Hudhayfah also undertook a number of campaigns from Armenia towards the Khazar lands.[5] After nearly one year, 'Uthmân dismissed him and appointed al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah ﷺ as governor of Armenia, and when 'Uthmân died, al-Mugheerah was governor of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.[6] This province is regarded as a new addition that 'Uthmân brought to the Islamic state, that had not been conquered before, and the Muslims were faced with a great deal of hardship in conquering it, organizing it and controlling it.[7]

---

[1] *al-Kharâj wa Sinâ'at al-Kitâbah* by Qudâmah ibn Ja'far, p. 326

[2] *al-Futooh* by Ibn A'tham, 2/112

[3] *al-Khazar*: a Turkish region in Central Asia. It is now in southern Russia

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/177

[5] ibid.

[6] *Tareekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/268; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/177

[7] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/177

The province of Egypt

The governor of Egypt during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ was 'Amr ibn al-'Aas, who ruled it for almost four years[1] , and he was its governor at the time of 'Umar's death. 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân confirmed his appointment for a short while at the beginning of his caliphate, and he was helped in some of his work in Egypt by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh[2] , who had accompanied 'Amr ibn al-'Aas since the days of his conquests in Palestine, when he was one of his commanders and participated with him in the conquest of Egypt.[3] 'Umar appointed him as governor of Upper Egypt after it was conquered.[4] It seems that there was some difference of opinion between 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh. 'Amr ibn al-'Aas went to 'Uthmân after allegiance was sworn to him as caliph, and asked him to dismiss 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd from his position as governor of Upper Egypt, but 'Uthmân refused to do that, and told him that 'Umar was the one who had appointed Ibn Abi'l-Sarh, and that he had not done anything to deserve dismissal. But 'Amr insisted that he be dismissed, and 'Uthmân insisted on not agreeing to that. As the result of this insistence on both sides, 'Uthmân decided that it was better to dismiss 'Amr from his post and to appoint 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh in his stead, and this is what happened in fact.[5] It was in these circumstances that the Byzantines launched a raid on Alexandria and took over the city, killing all the Muslims there. The caliph decided to appoint 'Amr in command of the Egyptian Army to re-conquer Alexandria and deal with the Byzantine army, and he did that.[6] We have discussed the conquests in

---

[1] *al-Nujoom al-Zâhirah fi Mulook Misr wa'l-Qâhirah,* by Jamâl al-Deen Bardi, 1/77

[2] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala',* 1/33

[3] ibid.

[4] *Wulât Misr* by al-Kindi, p. 33; *Futooh Misr wa Akhbâruha,* p. 173

[5] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/178

[6] op. cit., 1/178, 179

detail above. Then 'Uthmân decided to reinstate 'Amr as commander of all the troops of Egypt, and to put 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd in charge of the *kharâj*, but 'Amr refused that, and there are hardly any reports about 'Amr's governorship during the reign of 'Uthmân ﷺ, apart from what is narrated about his role in *jihad*, whether that was repelling the Byzantines and driving them out of Alexandria and establishing security in all regions of Egypt, or with regard to the difference of opinion concerning *kharâj* between 'Uthmân and 'Amr.[1] 'After 'Amr ibn al-'Aas was dismissed from his post in Egypt a second time - or from the governorship of Alexandria according to the most correct view - and after he rejected 'Uthmân's suggestion that he be appointed in charge of the troops and Ibn Abi'l-Sarh be appointed in charge of the *kharâj*, 'Uthmân confirmed the appointment of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh once more as governor of Egypt, and he became its official governor, in charge of running the affairs of Egypt and its troops, *kharâj*, etc.[2] The province of Egypt was initially calm and stable, until the troublemakers such as 'Abd-Allah ibn Saba' managed to reach it and stir up the people. They and those who were influenced by them played a large role in the killing of 'Uthmân ﷺ[3], which we will discuss in detail below, in sha Allâh.

The province of Basra

When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ was martyred, his governor in Basra was Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. At that time, Basran society had begun to see some basic social and demographic changes as it became one of the greatest Islamic military centres. Numerous tribes migrated there and its troops began to conquer new places, so it attained special importance at the beginning of 'Uthmân's caliphate.[4] Its people became busy with their own affairs as well as public affairs such as *jihad* etc, hence governing such a region

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/179; *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 217

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/79

[3] op. cit., 1/186

[4] *al-Tanzeemât al-Ijtimâ'iyyah wa'l-Iqtisâdiyyah fi'-Basrah*, by Sâlih al-'Ali, p. 141

and the other areas under its administration was regarded as a mission that was far from easy and that demanded special administrative skills. Perhaps 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb felt that Abu Moosa was particularly able to administer that province, as he left instructions for the caliph who came after him to leave Abu Moosa in that post for four years after his death.[1] The period of Abu Moosa's governorship of Basra was one in which the people of Basra played a prominent role in *jihad*, and Abu Moosa himself played a prominent role in numerous conquests in Persia, in addition to strengthening the Muslims' position in previously-conquered regions, where the people were trying to rebel after the death of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ. Abu Moosa launched campaigns against them and established Islam in those regions.[2] In addition to his role in the conquests, Abu Moosa also played an important role in setting up an irrigation system and digging channels in Basra during his governorship at the time of 'Uthmân. He dug a channel to bring drinking water to Basra, on which the people relied for their drinking water afterwards. He also began other projects to dig other channels, but then he was dismissed from his post and was unable to complete them, and his successor 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir completed them.[3] Abu Moosa did not remain governor of Basra for long, as 'Uthmân dismissed him in 29 AH - as most reports indicate - and he appointed 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz in his place.[4] The historians narrated a number of reports about this dismissal of Abu Moosa, from which we conclude that there was some problem between Abu Moosa and the troops of Basra, but there was some difference of opinion as to its cause. Some of the people of Basra came to 'Uthmân and urged him to dismiss Abu Moosa, saying: We do not want you to ask us everything we know about him; appoint someone else in his place. 'Uthmân said to them: Who do you want? They said: Anyone but

---

[1] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/391; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/186

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/187

[3] ibid.

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/264

him; and some people asked 'Uthmân to appoint a Qurashi as their governor.[1] So 'Uthmân dismissed Abu Moosa and appointed 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir in his place. Here the wisdom and open-mindedness of Abu Moosa, and his obedience to the command of the caliph, become clear to us, and we see that he was not keen to remain governor as some people think. When the news of his dismissal and the appointment of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir in his place reached him, he ascended the minbar and praised 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, who was a young man of 25 years, and one of the things that Abu Moosa said in praise of him was: There has come to you a young man of noble Qurashi descent, who will be generous to you.[2]

In these difficult circumstances in Basra, 'Uthmân ﷺ managed to appoint a new leader to whom the troops would listen and thus become united in the face of the enemy. Moreover this dismissal was an honour for Abu Moosa, as it spared him from humiliation at the hands of the common folk who had been influenced by the troublemakers and the deviant ideas of the rebels who bore hatred against him and had started to slander him and incite people against him.[3] The province of Basra went through some difficulties when Ibn 'Aamir was appointed governor, which motivated 'Uthmân to introduce some political changes in provincial administration; he put the troops of Bahrain and Oman under the control of Ibn 'Aamir in Basra, so that he would have stronger authority in facing the threats that he was facing at that time. His introduction of new troops had the effect of strengthening the power and authority of Ibn 'Aamir, and it also had an effect on Basra itself, which became one of the established Islamic capitals, and the tribes began to migrate to it in even greater numbers than before.[4] Thus the burdens of

[1] ibid.

[2] op. cit., 5/266; *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*. 3/19

[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/189

[4] *al-Tanzeemât al-Ijtimâ'iyyah wa'l-Iqtisâdiyyah fi'-Basrah fi'l-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijri*, by Sâlih al-'Ali, p. 141

governorship increased with regard to the *diwaan* and other administrative, financial, security and other issues.

The province of Basra, the troops and Ibn 'Aamir himself achieved a great conquest that started straight after he was appointed as governor, and which ended before the murder of the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ.[1] This has been discussed above in our discussion of the conquests of 'Uthmân ﷺ. During the days of Ibn 'Aamir, Basra attained a special status among all other Islamic provinces, and attracted the attention of the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ as the result of its conquests and expansion in different fields. It became a prominent administrative centre[2] from which other areas were administered. Ibn 'Aamir was responsible for the appointment of governors in different areas that were under his authority, by prior agreement with the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ. Hence his responsibility was great. Ibn 'Aamir began to appoint governors of those regions as soon as he was appointed, selecting commanders and governors for appointment in those regions, among the most important of which were Oman, Bahrain, Sajistan, Khorasan, Fars and al-Ahwâz, among other cities in those vast regions.[3] He used to travel and visit these governors and agents from time to time, as dictated by public interests. During his governorship Basra also became famous for its *bayt al-mâl,* as both income and expenditure increased at that time. During 'Umar's reign, Ziyâd ibn Abi Sufyân was in charge of its *bayt al-mâl,* and he also took care of some of the channel-digging projects etc. on behalf of Ibn 'Aamir.[4] During Ibn 'Aamir's governorship, dirhams were minted between 30 and 35 AH in some parts of Persia that belonged to his province, on which were some Arabic words.[5] Ibn 'Aamir was loved by the people of Basra in general from the time he first came to them,

---

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/189

[2] op. cit., 1/193

[3] *Nihâyat al-Arab, 19/433* – p. 238 note 2

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/194

[5] *al-Darâhim al-Islamiyyah* by Widâd 'Ali al-Qazzâz, p. 14 (note 4 on page 238

despite the rumours that 'Uthmân had only appointed him because he was his relative; the people of Basra were happy with him and kept him.[1] From this discussion it is clear that the governorship of Basra at the time of 'Uthmân was held by only two men: Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, and each of these two governors played his role in controlling the affairs of Basra and other regions under its administration.[2]

The province of Kufah

When allegiance was given to 'Uthmân as caliph, the governor of Kufah was al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah ﷺ, who had become its governor at the end of 'Umar's reign.[3] 'Uthmân ﷺ dismissed al-Mugheerah and appointed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs in his place. The reason given for this dismissal was that it was done on 'Umar's instructions, as he advised the caliph who came after him to appoint Sa'd, since 'Umar had dismissed him from his post as governor of Kufah at the end of his caliphate. He said: "I did not dismiss him because of any bad conduct or betrayal on his part, and I advise the caliph who comes after me to appoint him."[4] So Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs became governor of Kufah and this appointment was shared between Sa'd and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood: Sa'd led the prayers and was in charge of the troops, and Ibn Mas'ood was in charge of the *bayt al-mâl*.[5] Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs was very experienced, having been governor of Kufah, and he had a deep knowledge of its affairs, inhabitants, border posts and troops, because he had been its founder at the time of 'Umar and had been its governor for a number of years, so he was the most experienced of people and had the most knowledge about it.[6]

---

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/194
[2] op. cit., 1/195
[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 5/239
[4] op. cit., 2/225
[5] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/250; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/196
[6] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, 2/250; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/196

Among the deeds undertaken by Sa'd when he was governor of Kufah at the time of 'Uthmân was visiting some of the border posts belonging to Kufah, including al-Rayy, and organizing them. That was in 25 AH.[1] He also appointed some new agents in Hamadhân and its environs. But it was not long before some differences arose between Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood. Ibn Mas'ood was in charge of the *bayt al-mâl,* and Sa'd borrowed something from it, to be repaid at a certain time. The time for repayment came and Sa'd could not pay that loan. Ibn Mas'ood came to him and asked him to pay back the loan, and spoke harshly to him, and people gathered around them. 'Uthmân decided to dismiss Sa'd and leave Ibn Mas'ood in his post; the punishment for Sa'd was dismissal and the punishment for Ibn Mas'ood was leaving him in his post, as al-Tabari says.[2] This story shows us the piety of both Sahâbis concerned. It indicates that Sa'd needed money and could not find what he needed, so he was compelled to borrow from the *bayt al-mâl*; it also shows us that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood was keen to protect the Muslims' wealth and he insisted on getting the repayment from Sa'd who was the governor and ruler of Kufah. Sa'd's governorship of Kufah lasted for one year and a few months.[3]

After the dismissal of Sa'd, 'Uthmân appointed al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet as governor of Kufah, who prior to this appointment had been the commander of Abu Bakr's army in Jordan, then had worked for 'Umar as governor of al-Jazeerah.[4] At the end of 'Umar's caliphate and the beginning of 'Uthmân's, al-Waleed was one of the commanders of the troops in Kufah, and he engaged in *jihad* in a number of places at the head of those troops.[5] Before he was appointed as governor of Kufah he had gained a great deal of experience of Kufah and its troops, border

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/197

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/251

[3] op. cit., 5/250

[4] op. cit., 1/251

[5] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/198

posts and other affairs. It was the custom of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs to prefer people with experience of the region when they needed to appoint new governors. So 'Uthmân chose al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah to be governor of Kufah. Many of those who wrote about 'Uthmân's appointment of al-Waleed, both earlier and later writers, tried to accuse 'Uthmân with regard to this appointment. They said that 'Uthmân appointed his uterine brother al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah as governor of Kufah.[1] This is a direct criticism of 'Uthmân ﷺ.[2] At the beginning of al-Waleed's governorship, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood worked with him as he was in charge of the *bayt al-mâl,* but there was a difference of opinion between al-Waleed and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood concerning the wealth that belongs to the state, and the matter was referred to 'Uthmân to decide as he saw fit. 'Uthmân ﷺ thought that the best thing to do was to give both responsibilities to al-Waleed and to dismiss 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood. He thought that this was in the public interest.[3] Al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah continued to be loved by the people of Kufah. He had no gate on his house[4] , and he would receive people at various times in order to solve their problems and fulfil his duties towards them, until some incidents took place in Kufah and he acquired some enemies because of his determined stance with regard to the case of Ibn al-Haysamân al-Khuzâ'i, who was killed by a group of young people in Kufah. Al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah heeded 'Uthmân's command that retaliation *(qisâs)* be carried out against these young transgressors. From that time, the heirs and relatives of these criminals began to spread rumours against al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah and tried hard to seek out al-Waleed's mistakes whenever they could. These hateful characters managed to fabricate a case against al-Waleed, which was the claim that he had drunk wine, which led to the *hadd* punishment being carried out against him

[1] op. cit., 1/198

[2] See the accusations levelled by Taha Hussein in his book *al-Fitnah al-Kubra*, 1/94

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 108*

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/251

and to his being dismissed from his post as governor of Kufah, which is what these conspirators wanted.[1] The case of al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah being accused of drinking wine will be discussed in detail when we examine the governors of 'Uthmân ‎ﷺ, *in sha Allâh*.

After al-Waleed was dismissed, 'Uthmân sent a letter to the people of Kufah in which he said: From the slave of Allâh 'Uthmân, the *ameer al-mu'mineen*, to the people of Kufah. Salâm. To proceed: I appointed over you al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah and he showed efficiency and proper conduct, and he was one of the most righteous of his people. I advised you to be kind to him and him to be kind to you. But when he had done his best for you and refrained from harming you, and you could not find any apparent faults in him, you shed doubts on his private life, and Allâh knows best about you and about him. I have sent to you Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas as governor.[2] The Kufans' complaint about al-Waleed and his dismissal was one in a series of many complaints and dismissals by some of the people of Kufah against their governors.[3] Many of the people of Kufah were angry about the dismissal of al-Waleed. After 'Uthmân dismissed al-Waleed from his post as governor of Kufah, he appointed Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas as his successor in 30 AH. He had been living in Madînah, and he went to Kufah accompanied by a delegation of Kufans who had come to 'Uthmân to complain about al-Waleed, among whom were al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i and others.[4] When Sa'eed reached Kufah, he ascended the minbar and praised Allâh, then he said: By Allâh I have been sent to you unwillingly, but I had no other alternative but to obey when I was commanded. *Fitnah* is looming and by Allâh I shall certainly suppress it until it is under control; I shall do that myself from this day. Then he descended from the minbar.[5]

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/201
[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/280
[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/206
[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/280
[5] op. cit., 5/280

From this speech it is clear that Sa'eed could see the signs and beginnings of *fitnah* that had started to appear in Kufah before he was appointed as governor, and he warned those who wanted to stir up *fitnah* that he was determined to put an end to the *fitnah* that he sensed was beginning in Kufah.[1] Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas managed to organize things in his province and appoint agents and commanders in the various border posts belonging to Kufah and to control their affairs.[2] He carried out a number of successful campaigns that we have discussed when speaking of the conquests during 'Uthmân's reign. Then the *fitnah* began to rear its head in Kufah in 33 AH, as we shall discuss below in detail, in sha Allâh. Al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i drew up a plot against Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and deceived some of the common folk of Kufah, who went along with al-Ashtar in rejecting the governorship of Sa'eed and asking 'Uthmân to replace him with someone else. Sa'eed was only one of the governors whom the people of Kufah objected to and demanded their dismissal, such as Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah and others. The request for his dismissal was accompanied by some sort of rebellion in which the thugs carried weapons, and this set a dangerous precedent in the history of Kufah and in the history of the Islamic state as a whole. There was no real reason for it; in fact the real reason was that circumstances and people had changed under the influence of those who had been calling for *fitnah* and rebellion against 'Uthmân. The caliph 'Uthmân issued orders appointing Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari as governor of Kufah and dismissing Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas on the basis of the demands made by some of the people of Kufah. Abu Moosa started his governorship with a speech to the people of Kufah in which he said: O people, do not join such troubles and do not do that again; adhere to the main body of Muslims and obedience, beware of haste, and be patient, for you now have a new leader. They said: Lead us in prayer. He said: No, not unless you promise to listen to

[1] *al-Wilayah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/207

[2] op. cit., 1/208

and obey 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. They said: We promise to listen to and obey 'Uthmân.[1] 'Uthmân wrote to the people of Kufah saying: In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. I have appointed over you the one whom you have chosen, and I have dismissed Sa'eed. By Allâh, I shall be tolerant with you and I shall be patient with you, and I shall do my best to set your affairs straight. You will never ask for anything that does not involve disobedience towards Allâh but you will be given it, and there is nothing that you dislike, so long as it does not involve disobedience towards Allâh, but you will be exempted from it. So you will have no excuse (to misbehave).[2]

Abu Moosa ؓ remained governor of Kufah until 'Uthmân ؓ was killed.[3] Thus we find that the province of Kufah at the time of 'Uthmân ؓ was ruled by five governors, starting with al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, and ending with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. Each of these five periods was filled with events that had a direct effect on the course of the Islamic state. *Fitnah* emerged in Kufah and its people became well known for causing trouble for their governors and rejecting them in many cases, no matter how hard they tried to please them. They complained about Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, they complained about al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, and they expelled Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas. We may note here that they caused a great deal of trouble to 'Umar before 'Uthmân, to such an extent that 'Umar said concerning them: Who will sort out the people of Kufah for me? Some of the people of Kufah played a direct, leading role in the murder of the caliph 'Uthmân ؓ.

It is worth noting that there were some satellite provinces belonging to Kufah, such as Tabaristan, Azerbaijan and some other regions to the north of Fars.[4] What supports the view that they were satellites of Kufah is the fact that the governors of Kufah - including Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas - were the ones who led the

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/339

[2] op. cit., 5/343

[3] ibid.

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/213

conquests in these regions, and they also disciplined their people when they rebelled. So these satellite provinces played a role complementary to that of Kufah to a large extent.[1]

From the above discussion about the Islamic provinces at the time of 'Uthmân, it is clear that some provinces enjoyed a lengthy period of stability throughout 'Uthmân's reign, including the provinces in the Arabian Peninsula such as Bahrain, Yemen, Makkah, al-Tâ'if and others. Greater Syria also enjoyed stability throughout 'Uthmân's caliphate. As for Basra, its people were engaged in conquest with their governor 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir. Egypt and Basra were both affected by problems at the end of 'Uthmân's caliphate, thus *fitnah* emerged in those places and some of their people attacked Madînah and killed the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ instead of fighting the enemies of Islam![2]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] ibid.

[2] op. cit., 1/214

'Uthmân's policies with his governors and their rights and duties

'Uthmân's policies with his governors

'Uthmân ﷺ became caliph at the beginning of 24 AH, when the governors of 'Umar ﷺ were spread out throughout the Islamic regions. 'Uthmân left them in place for an entire year, then after that he began to dismiss them and appoint governors in these regions as his authority allowed him to do, and as he thought was in the best interests of the Muslims. Perhaps by doing so 'Uthmân was following the advice of 'Umar ﷺ, who had said: Do not leave any governor in place for more than a year, but leave al-Ash'ari in place for four years.[1] In his policies with regard to his governors, 'Uthmân relied on consultation with the Sahâbah in many cases, and he also joined some provinces to others when he thought that this was in the best interests of the Muslims. He joined Bahrain to Basra, and he joined the provinces of Greater Syria to one another following the death of some governors, or when some governors asked to be excused from this task.

'Uthmân ﷺ was always sincere towards his governors and

[1] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/391

showed justice and mercy towards the people. The first thing he wrote to his governors after allegiance was sworn to him as caliph of the Muslims was: Allâh has enjoined rulers to be shepherds and He has not enjoined them only to be money-collectors. The early generation of this ummah was created to be shepherds, not to be money-collectors, but soon your leaders will become money-collectors and they will not be shepherds. When they do that, there will be no modesty, honesty and loyalty. The best conduct is to examine the Muslims' affairs and see what is due from them, then give them what is due to them and take what is due from them; then to look at *ahl al-dhimmah* and give them what is due to them and take what is due from them; then look at the enemy with whom you engage in war, and seek victory over them by means of honesty (not treachery).[1]

From this we can see that 'Uthmân set out guidelines and policies for his governors to follow, by giving the Muslims their rights and asking from them the dues that they owed, and by giving *ahl al-dhimmah* their rights and asking from them the dues that they owed, and by being honest even towards the enemy, and by being just in all cases; their main concern should not be just to collect wealth.[2] 'Uthmân ﷺ also wrote to his governors with some specific instructions concerning new issues that had to do with administration of the provinces, in addition to his general letters, in which he issued specific instructions that were binding on all, such as his command to the people in the provinces to adhere to the *Mush-hafs* that had been written in Madînah with the full knowledge and approval of the *Sahâbah*, when he sent *Mush-hafs* to Kufah, Basra, Makkah, Egypt, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen and al-Jazeerah, in addition to the *Mus-haf* that was kept in Madînah.[3] 'Uthmân ordered that all other *Mush-hafs* be collected and burned, and that was done with the approval of the Sahâbah in Madînah, as was narrated from 'Ali ﷺ.[4] 'Uthmân

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/244
[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/215
[3] *Tareekh al-Madînah* by Abu Zayd al-Basri, 3/997
[4] op. cit., 3/995, 996

ﷺ was also keen that his commanders should compete with one another in *jihad* and conquering new lands. He wrote to 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir in Basra, and Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas in Kufah, saying: Whoever of you gets to Khorasan first will be its governor, which motivated Ibn 'Aamir to conquer Khorasan and Sa'eed ibn al-Aas to conquer Tabaristan.[1] 'Uthmân stipulated some conditions for his governors in some cases so that their actions would be in the best interests of the Muslims. For example, Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân wrote to 'Uthmân, trying to make it seem to be no serious matter to travel by sea to Cyprus, and 'Uthmân wrote back to him saying: If you travel by sea and take your wife with you, then do so with our permission, otherwise do not go. So he travelled by sea and took his wife with him.[2]

How 'Uthmân kept watch on his governors and checked on them frequently

'Uthmân implemented a number of measures to keep watch on his governors and check on them. These included the following:

His attendance at *Hajj*

'Uthmân was keen to perform *Hajj* himself and meet the pilgrims and listen to their complaints of unjust treatment from their governors. He also asked the governors to come and meet him every *Hajj* season, and he wrote to every region telling the governors and those who were complaining about them to attend every *Hajj* season.[3] This was a continuation of the practice at the time of 'Umar, when there would be an annual meeting between the caliph, the governors and the people.[4]

Questioning those who came from other regions and provinces

This method is regarded as one of the easiest, as it did not

[1] *Tareekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/166

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/216; *al-Kharâj wa Sinâ'at al-Kitâbah*, p. 306

[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/216, quoting from *Tareekh at-Tabari.*

[4] Ibid.

involve much effort on the part of the caliphs, and on many occasions it took place without prior arrangement. It was well known that the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs did this. The fact that the first three Rightly-Guided Caliphs lived in Madînah was a great help to the caliph, because so many people came to Madînah to visit it, especially during the *Hajj* season.[1]

Presence of people in the regions who wrote to the caliph

'Uthmân ﷺ received the letters sent by some of the common folk in the regions to Madînah with complaints. He received a letter sent by the people of Kufah, and a letter sent by the people of Egypt, and he also received letters sent by some people in Syria. 'Uthmân would read what was said in these letters and deal with it.[2]

Sending inspectors to the provinces

'Uthmân ﷺ sent a number of inspectors to the provinces to check on the situation and to find out the truth about the rumours that were in circulation about his governors being unjust towards the people. These inspectors brought back detailed reports about the governors.[3] He sent 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir to Egypt, Muhammad ibn Maslamah to Kufah, Usâmah ibn Zayd to Basra, and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar to Syria, in addition to sending other men to other places.[4]

Travelling to some provinces to check on things for himself

'Uthmân ﷺ used to visit Makkah during the *Hajj* and check on it, and he would meet governors and pilgrims from other regions there, and ask them how things were (in their provinces).

Asking governors to send delegations from the provinces so that he could ask them about their commanders and governors

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs often asked the governors to

---

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/122

[2] op. cit., 1/217

[3] ibid.

[4] ibid.

send some of the local people to them so that they could ask them questions. That happened often with 'Umar, 'Uthmân and 'Ali (ﷺ). As for Abu Bakr ﷺ, he was too busy with matters of *jihad* which prevented him from doing that, in addition to the fact that his caliphate was very short.[1]

Summoning the governors and questioning them about the situation in their lands

This method became well known during the time of the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. There was constant communication between 'Uthmân and his governors, to discuss various affairs of state. Among the most important of these communications was the meeting that 'Uthmân held with his governors in Madînah, whence he summoned the governors of Basra, Kufah, Syria, Egypt and elsewhere, and he summoned the senior Sahâbah and held a meeting in which he discussed with them the signs of *fitnah* that had begun to appear, and sought the opinions of those governors about the *fitnah* and how to deal with it, and each of these governors stated his opinion on how to deal with this phenomenon.[2]

Correspondence with the governors

'Uthmân asked the governors for reports on the people and lands under their rule. His method was well known throughout the period of the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and it was in fact the best method at the time of Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq and 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (ﷺ).[3]

These are the methods that 'Uthmân followed in checking on his governors and keeping an eye on them. He was keen that they should do their duty and in the event of any transgression on their part, he would discipline them for that mistake if he came to know of it. If it was proven that (a governor) had committed a transgression, he would take the decision to punish him

[1] op. cit., 2/122

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/123

[3] op. cit., 2/122

regardless of how well he thought of the governor. For example, he had al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah flogged, which is the punishment for drinking alcohol, because the conditions for carrying out that punishment were met, regardless of whether the witnesses were telling the truth or not[1] , and after that he dismissed him from his post as governor of Kufah.[2] 'Uthmân ﷺ used to write to the people of the regions when appointing a new governor, telling them to be helpful to him and vice versa. He also used to write to the common folk of different regions, telling them to listen and obey, so as to make things easier for the governors. For example, 'Uthmân sent a letter to the regions in which it said: I check on the governors and discuss their work every *Hajj* season, and since the time I became caliph I have urged the ummah to enjoin that which is good and forbid that which is evil. No complaint is brought to me about me or one of my agents but I check it and respond to it. Neither I nor my family have any rights that come before the rights of the people, so for the one who is beaten in secret or insulted in secret, whoever has any claim of that nature, let him come to *Hajj* and settle the score, whether his complaint is against me or my agent, or let them forgive, for Allâh rewards those who forgive. When this letter was read out in the regions, the people wept and prayed for 'Uthmân.[3]

The rights of governors

At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs it was established that the governors had certain rights, some that had to do with the people, and some that had to do with the caliph, in addition to other rights that had to do with the *bayt al-mâl*. All of these rights, whether intangible or material, were aimed primarily at helping the governors to do their duty and serve the people. Among the most important of these rights were the following:

[1] op. cit., 2/126

[2] op. cit., 2/217

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/349

Obedience as long as it did not involve disobedience towards Allâh

Allâh says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾

"O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (ﷺ), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination" (*An-Nisa'* 4:59)

Al-Qurtubi said: When Allâh addressed the rulers in the previous verse and started with them, He enjoined them to render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due and to judge between men with justice. In this verse, He is addressing the people under the care of those rulers, and He commands the people to obey Him first and foremost, by fulfilling His commands and heeding His prohibitions, then to obey His Messenger ﷺ secondly, fulfilling his commands and heeding his prohibitions, then to obey the rulers thirdly, according to the view of the majority, Abu Hurayrah, Ibn 'Abbâs and others.[1] At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in particular, and in Muslim society in general, sharee'ah is above all, and both ruler and people are subject to it, so obedience to the ruler must always be within the limits of obedience to Allâh and His Messenger, as the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«لَا طَاعَةَ فِي الْمَعْصِيَةِ، إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ فِي المَعْرُوفِ»

"There is no obedience if it involves sin; rather obedience is only

---

[1] *Tafseer al-Qurtubi,* 5/259

in that which is right and proper."[1]

Offering sincere advice to the governors

Based on the principle of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, which is something on which the entire ummah is agreed, and which is enjoined in various verses and ahâdeeth some of which speak of this principle in general, and others speak of this duty as it applies to governors in general and enjoin sincerity towards them, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs always wrote to their governors offering sincere advice. There are many texts that have been narrated concerning that.[2]

The people are required to convey sound information to the governor

They must be honest and truthful regardless of whether it is information about what is happening in general or about the enemy in particular, or about the agents and employees of the governor. They should hasten to do that as soon as possible, especially when it has to do with matters of war, information about the enemy or matters of misconduct by agents, etc, on the basis of shared responsibility with the governor in taking care of the general interests of the *ummah.*[3]

Supporting the governor in his view

When *fitnah* broke out and its proponents demanded that 'Uthmân dismiss some of his governors and 'Uthmân refused to do so, this support served the interests of the Muslim state and put a stop to trouble. This does not mean that he should not have paid attention to the complaints and supported his governors without investigating the matter, rather this support from the caliph should come after investigating the complaints and after examining the situation closely. That may have required sending

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Ahkâm,* no. 7257

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/56

[3] op. cit., 2/57

special committees including some of the *Sahâbah* to investigate these issues. Just as the caliph may have been required to support the governor, that was also required of the people; the people should respect them and honour them, even though 'Uthmân dismissed some of the governors because of what he thought was in the best interests of the people.

Respecting them after their dismissal

An example of that is what 'Uthmân did with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (ﷺ). We see that 'Uthmân consulted 'Amr ibn al-'Aas with regard to major issues of state after he dismissed him. This shows tremendous respect on the part of 'Uthmân towards governors whom he had dismissed.

Governors' salaries

Another right of governors was the salaries that they lived on. The principle of paying regular salaries is something that was agreed upon by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, following the example of the Messenger ﷺ. Even though the reports only mention the salaries of some of the workers, it is nevertheless clear that all workers had salaries at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Most of the reports that have been narrated on this topic focus primarily on the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, as they mention the amount of the salaries received by some of the governors at his time. 'Uthmân and 'Ali (ﷺ) followed what the previous caliphs had done, allocating salaries to their agents and governors. But it seems that at the time of 'Uthmân these stipends and salaries were more generous, including the salaries of the governors. That was due to the increased income of the *bayt al-mâl* as the result of the far-reaching conquests undertaken by 'Uthmân's governors in the east, Armenia, North Africa and elsewhere. 'Uthmân allocated generous bonuses to the governors in particular. He gave 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh one fifth of the *khums* as a reward for his conquests in North Africa, as he said to him: If Allâh grants you victory in North Africa tomorrow, you will have one fifth of the *khums* of the booty that Allâh grants

to the Muslims, as a bonus.[1] Whatever the case, giving salaries to the governors and making them independent of means was an Islamic principle enjoined by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and followed by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after him, so that the governors had no need of the people's wealth and were thus able to focus their efforts on the interests of the state.[2]

Duties of governors

Establishing Islam was the most important of these duties

Spreading Islamic religion among the people

As that was an era of great conquests, the governors were required to work at spreading Islam in the conquered lands, with the help of the *Sahâbah* who were with them. The governors undertook this duty with the help of the people who were with them at the beginning of the conquests in the reign of Abu Bakr ﷺ. Then the regions began to rely on teachers and *fuqaha'* who came to them for this purpose, after the state expanded and new cities were built at the time of 'Umar. There is evidence to prove that there were teachers in those places during the latter part of 'Umar's reign and the caliphates of 'Uthmân and 'Ali, because of the large number of inhabitants in the regions and large numbers of seekers of knowledge, and because the governors were preoccupied with other matters and the expansion of the provinces, so that one province would contain many cities whose people were in need of *fuqaha'* and teachers.[3]

Establishing prayer

Throughout the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the caliph himself was the one who established and led prayers in congregation, *Jumu'ah* prayer and *Eid* prayers in the city where he lived, and he would address the people on *Jumu'ah*, *Eid* and

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/252

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/64

[3] op. cit., 2/66

other occasions. Similarly, his deputies undertook the same tasks in their cities. Throughout the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the governors addressed the people themselves and led them in prayer.[1]

Protecting religion and its principles

After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs felt a sense of duty with regard to protecting Islam and its sound principles that had been revealed to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. They strove hard to keep alive the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and to ward off innovations, and they strove to maintain respect for the religion of Allâh and for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and to ward off plots that tried to insert false ideas into the teachings of this religion. 'Uthmân ﷺ strove to have the *Mus'haf* written out and sent copies of it to the regions, and he ordered his governors to burn all other *mus-hafs* that the people had, in order to preserve the most important foundation of religion, namely the Holy Qur'ân.[2] 'Uthmân's governors also strove hard to fight the Saba'is (followers of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba') who introduced weird ideas into Islam, putting pressure on them and expelling them.[3] To sum up, protection of Islam was one of the most important duties with which the governors were entrusted.[4]

Planning and building mosques

When the Messenger ﷺ reached Quba', he built the first mosque in Islam, and after he arrived in Madînah, he started to build his mosque there. When the Messenger ﷺ sent governors to other regions, these governors built mosques there, and after that the Rightly-Guided Caliphs continued building mosques in the cities and countries that the Muslims conquered. Even if the governors did not build all these mosques themselves, they

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/67

[2] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* 3/996-999

[3] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah,* by Sulaymân al-'Awdah, p. 214

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/69

played a role in establishing the principal mosques in the cities belonging to their provinces, especially the Jâmi' mosques.[1]

Facilitating *Hajj*

In the early days of Islam the governors were responsible for facilitating *Hajj* matters in their provinces and ensuring the safety of the pilgrims. The governors appointed leaders for the *Hajj* caravans and decided the time for them to start their journey, because the pilgrims could not leave the city without the permission of the governor; some governors did not limit themselves only to organizing matters, rather we see that some of them worked on providing water along the routes travelled by the pilgrims from their provinces. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz provided water along the pilgrim route from Basra when he was its governor for 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, as he dug wells along the route from Basra to Makkah.[2] After that, the fuqaha' stated that providing facilities for the pilgrims from his city was one of the duties of a governor. Al-Mâwirdi said: As for providing facilities for the pilgrims, that is included in the governor's duties.[3]

Carrying out *hadd* punishments

Carrying out *hadd* punishments against those who go against the commands of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ was a religious obligation borne by the governors, and it was one of the most important duties that were delegated to them, whether it had to do with punishment of those who caused damage to public facilities or those who caused harm to specific individuals.[4] 'Uthmân ﷺ and his governors carried out *hadd* punishments during his reign, as prescribed in sharee'ah.

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/192

[3] *al-Ahkâm al-Sultâniyyah* by Abu'l-Hasan al-Mâwirdi, p. 33

[4] *as-Siyâsah al-Shar'iyyah* by Ibn Taymiyah

Keeping people safe in their own lands

Preserving security in the province was one of the most important duties of the governor, and in order to achieve that he did a number of things, the most important of which was carrying out *hadd* punishments on evildoers and immoral people[1] , which helps to control and limit crimes that threaten people's lives and property, leading to a reduction in the level of murder, theft, banditry and other such crimes. It also included punishment for the rumours that people fabricate against one another with accusations of adultery and other crimes. Carrying out *hadd* punishments in such cases prevents acts of verbal aggression against people's honour and dignity. The matter is not limited to protecting people from one another, rather the governors - on the command of the caliphs - strove to protect their people from vermin, insects and scorpions etc. al-Balâdhuri said: The governor of Naseebeen wrote to Mu'âwiyah when he was 'Uthmân's governor in greater Syria and al-Jazeerah, complaining that some of the Muslims who were with him had been stung by scorpions. Mu'âwiyah wrote back to him, telling him to order the people in every quarter of the city to catch a certain number of scorpions every night. He did that, and they would bring them to him and he would issue orders that they be killed.[2]

Jihad for the sake of Allâh

Generally speaking, at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the governors were the leaders of *jihad* in those provinces. The governors at the time of 'Uthmân played a large role in the conquests, such as 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz, al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah and Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, who led the conquests in the east; 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh who led the conquests in North Africa; and Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân who led the conquests in Armenia and Byzantine territory. Thus we can see that in addition to their administrative role, the

---

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/71

[2] *Futooh al-Buldân*, by al-Balâdhuri, p. 183

governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs were also *mujâhideen* who were striving against the enemy in different regions, but that did not prevent them from fulfilling the duties with which they had been entrusted. Undoubtedly there were other tasks connected to *jihad*. The historical sources speak of the most important of these tasks that were undertaken by the governors, such as the following:

(a) The governors sent volunteers to fight in *jihad*. The governors of Yemen, Bahrain, Makkah and Oman all sent *mujâhideen* throughout the caliphates of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân.[1]

(b) Defending the province against enemies. The governors of Syria fought off the Byzantines throughout the period of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and similarly the governors of Iraq fought off the Persians until they managed to kill the last of their kings at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ.

(c) Fortifying their lands. 'Uthmân ﷺ issued commands that the coasts be fortified and troops be stationed there, and he allocated land to the Muslims who settled there to help populate those regions.[2]

(d) Seeking information about the enemy. The governors sought out news about the enemy and directed blows against them. They managed to penetrate their ranks by sending spies among them.

(e) Supplying horses to the regions. Horses played an extremely important role in *jihad*, and the Muslims had taken a special interest in the raising and training of horses since the days of the Messenger ﷺ. 'Umar introduced a general policy throughout the state for

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/72

[2] op. cit., 2/73

supplying the horses that were needed for *jihad* throughout the Islamic regions according to need.[1] 'Uthmân ﷺ followed the same policy that had been introduced by 'Umar with regard to horses. These horses were kept in a state of readiness for immediate response to defend the Islamic state.

(f) Teaching children and preparing them for *jihad*. The Rightly-Guided Caliphs paid attention to the education of children and teaching them that which would help them to engage in *jihad* in the future.

(g) Keeping records of the troops *(diwaan)*. 'Uthmân followed 'Umar's policy in paying attention to the records of the troops. He made sure that records were kept in all regions because he believed that the people of the regions were in the most need of this record-keeping, especially those who were close to the enemy; those were the regions that needed troops all the time. The governors were directly responsible for the records of troops, despite the fact that there were other employees who could take care of it, because the governors were also military commanders, so their responsibility with regard to the *diwaan* records was like that of the caliph, because they were his deputies.[2]

(h) Upholding treaties. The Islamic conquests at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs were accompanied by correspondence with the enemy, and there were many treaties and peace deals between the Muslims and the peoples of the conquered lands. As military leaders, the governors were directly responsible for making and upholding these treaties.[3]

---

[1] op. cit., 2/74

[2] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/75

[3] ibid.

Striving to ensure people's livelihood

From the time of Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq ﷺ, the Rightly-Guided Caliphs followed a new method of distributing stipends to the Muslims from the income of the *bayt al-mâl*. Initially that was not limited to certain times, but at the time of 'Umar that changed after he set up record-keeping in the various regions. The distribution of stipends became regular and organized, and this system was also followed by 'Uthmân. The caliphs and their governors during the period of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs did not limit themselves to securing the food supply and keeping an eye on the markets, rather the issue of accommodation and sharing it out was also the responsibility of the governors, who supervised the allocation of houses in the conquered cities.[1]

Appointing workers and employees

Appointing workers and employees in the various departments belonging to the province was often the task of the governor, because a province was usually composed of a capital city and other cities and regions belonging to the province, which needed organization of its affairs. So the governors would appoint workers and employees in those regions. At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ these employees of the governor took care of large areas because the provinces increased in size as the result of conquests and because of the amalgamation of large areas that were incorporated into provinces that had previously been limited in size, such as Basra, Kufah, greater Syria and others. So the appointment and distribution of workers was one of the important tasks undertaken by the governors.

Taking care of *ahl al-dhimmah*

Taking care of *ahl al-dhimmah*, respecting the treaties with them, giving them their rights, asking them for what they owed to the Muslims, keeping an eye on them, and defending their rights against those who wronged them, were all among the duties of

---

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/80

the governor, based on the commands of *sharee'ah*.[1]

Consulting wise people in their provinces

The caliphs followed the method of the Prophet ﷺ, which was to consult wise men among the *Sahâbah*. They used to hold meetings with the senior *Sahâbah* and consult them about various issues.[2] They also told their governors to consult the wise people in their lands. The governors implemented that and held meetings with their people to find out their opinions.[3]

Checking the province's need for development and construction

It is well known that the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and their governors paid attention to the people's needs for development and agriculture. At the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, his governor in Basra, dug wells not only in Basra but in many other places.[4]

Paying attention to the social situations of the provincial inhabitants

On the basis of Islamic teachings, the governors paid attention to these matters, but the governors of that era - on the orders of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs - did some kinds of social work that it may be difficult for people in their position to do. The caliphs were keen to treat people according to their status, and were also keen for their governors to show special respect to people of high status and those who had come to Islam first. For example, 'Uthmân's governor in Kufah wrote to him complaining that the Bedouin and riffraff were overwhelming the people of status and those who had come to Islam earlier. 'Uthmân wrote back to him saying: Show preference to the senior Muslims and those who came first, to whom Allâh granted victory in that land,

---

[1] ibid.

[2] op. cit., 2/81

[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/82' *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/280

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/82

and let those who came to join them later as the result of their efforts come second to them, unless they are becoming slow in following the truth and have ceased to act upon it, and those who came later have started to do it. Recognize everyone according to his status, and deal with all of them on the basis of justice and fairness, because justice may be achieved by acknowledging the people according to their status.

The governor's working hours

It is well known that 'Uthmân's governor in Kufah, al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, had no gate on his house, and that he received people at all times. This indicates that the people had the freedom to come and see the governor without any problem whenever they wanted to see him for a reason.[1] The governor had a section attached to his house that was open to the people whenever they wanted to come and see him and that was separate from the area where his wife and children lived.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] op. cit., 2/82

Who were the governors of 'Uthmân ﷺ?

The historians talk a great deal about 'Uthmân's alleged favouritism towards his relatives and say that they held the reins of power during his caliphate, to such an extent that they provoked many people against him and they revolted in protest at his giving power to his relatives.[1] The relatives of 'Uthmân whom he appointed to positions of authority were:

1. Mu'âwiyah

2. 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh

3. al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah

4. Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas

5. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir

These five whom 'Uthmân appointed as governors were related to him, and according to their claims this is cause for criticism. Let us look first at the names of all the governors of 'Uthmân ﷺ. They were: Abu Moosa al-Asha'ri, al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr, Jâbir al-Muzani, Habeeb ibn Maslamah, 'Abd al-Rahmân

[1] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha,* p. 159

ibn Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, Abu'l-A'war al-Sulami, Hakeem ibn Salâmah, al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, Jareer ibn 'Abd-Allâh al-Bajali, 'Uyaynah ibn al-Nahhâs, Mâlik ibn Habeeb, al-Naseer al-'Ajali, al-Sâ'ib ibn al-Aqra', Sa'eed ibn Qays, Salmân ibn Rabee'ah, Khunays ibn Hubaysh, al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Rabee'ah, Ya'la ibn Munayyah[1], 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr al-Hadrami and 'Ali ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza. These were the governors of 'Uthmân ﷺ and if we examine this list for its statistics, we will find that there were eighteen governors. Would it not be reasonable to suggest that five men from Banu Umayyah were qualified to be governors, especially since we know that the Prophet ﷺ used to appoint men from Banu Umayyah to do work for the state more than men from other tribes? Moreover, these governors were not all appointed at the same time, rather 'Uthmân ﷺ appointed al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, then he dismissed him and appointed Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas in his stead, so it was not the case that all five were appointed at the same time. Before 'Uthmân died, he dismissed Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas too, and when 'Uthmân died there were only three governors who were from Banu Umayyah: Mu'âwiyah, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz. 'Uthmân dismissed al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah and Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas, but from which province did he dismiss them? From Kufah, from which 'Umar had dismissed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs, Kufah which never approved of any governor. The fact that 'Uthmân dismissed these governors does not reflect any criticism of them, rather it is a criticism of the city over which they had been appointed.[2]

Banu Umayyah were employed by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ during his lifetime, and subsequently by those who cannot be accused of favouring them because of blood ties, namely Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them). We do not know of any tribe of Quraysh that had more people employed by

---

[1] His full name was Ya'la ibn Umayyah ibn Abi 'Ubaydah al-Tameemi. *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/100

[2] *Hiqbah min at-Tareekh*, p. 75

the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ than Banu 'Abd Shams, because they were numerous and they were known to be people of leadership quality and status. The Prophet ﷺ employed 'Itâb ibn Usayd ibn Abi'l-'Aas as governor of Makkah, Abu Sufyân ibn Harb over Najrân, Khâlid ibn Sa'eed in charge of the zakâh of Banu Madhjah, and Abân ibn Sa'eed in charge of some campaigns then as governor of Bahrain. So 'Uthmân only appointed people of the same nature and clan as the Prophet ﷺ did, and as Abu Bakr and 'Umar did after him. Abu Bakr appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufyân in charge of the conquests in Syria, and 'Umar left him in that post, then after Yazeed died he appointed his brother Mu'âwiyah.[1]

The question that arises here is: did they prove that they were suited to the job or not? We will see below the testimony of the scholars about these governors who were appointed by 'Uthmân ﷺ.

'Uthmân was a Rightly-Guided Caliph whose example is to be followed, and his actions are a precedent that may be used as guidelines for the ummah. Just as 'Umar set a precedent for the caliphs who came after him to refrain from appointing relatives in the running of affairs, 'Uthmân set a precedent for the caliphs who came after him to appoint relatives if they are qualified. The one who studies the life of 'Uthmân will have no doubt that they were all qualified administrators, and whatever 'Uthmân is criticized for is in fact within the limits of permissibility.[2]

The governors whom 'Uthmân appointed from among his relatives are proven to have been qualified and capable in running the affairs of their provinces. Allâh granted many conquests at their hands, and they treated the people justly and kindly. Some of them had been appointed as governors previously, during the reigns of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (ﷺ).[3] Let us look at what the scholars have to say about these governors.

[1] *Minhâj as-Sunnah,* 3.175, 176

[2] *al-Asâs fi'l-Sunnah wa Fiqhiha,* by Sa'eed Hawa, 4/1675

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/417

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân ibn Harb al-Umawi

The biographers state that this noble *Sahâbi* had many good qualities, of which we will mention a few:

Praise for Mu'âwiyah in the Holy Qur'ân

Mu'âwiyah took part in the campaign of Hunayn, and Allâh says:

﴿ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنزَلَ جُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ﴾

"Then Allâh did send down His Sakeenah (calmness, tranquillity and reassurance) on the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and on the believers, and sent down forces (angels) which you saw not, and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers" (*At-Tawbah* 9:26)

Mu'âwiyah ﵁ was one of those who were present at the Battle of Hunayn, so he was one of the believers upon whom Allâh sent down his *Sakeenah*, along with the Prophet ﷺ.[1]

Praise from the *Sunnah*

The Prophet ﷺ prayed for Mu'âwiyah ﵁, such as when he said:

«اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ هَادِيًا مَهْدِيًّا وَاهْدِ بِهِ»

"O Allâh, make him a guide[2] *and guided*[3] *, and guide others through him."*[4]

And he ﷺ said:

---

[1] *Marwiyât Khilâfat Mu'âwiyah fi Tareekh at-Tabari*, by Khâlid al-Ghayth, p. 23

[2] i.e., a guide for people, or one who directs others to do good

[3] i.e., guided in himself

[4] *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, by al-Albâni, 3/236 (3842)

«اللَّهُمَّ عَلِّمْ مُعَاوِيَةَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِسَابَ وَقِهِ الْعَذَابَ»

"O Allâh, teach Mu'âwiyah literacy and numeracy, and protect him from punishment."[1]

And the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«أَوَّلُ جَيْشٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَغْزُونَ البَحْرَ قَدْ أَوْجَبُوا، قالَتْ أُمُّ حَرَام: قُلْتُ: يا رَسُولَ اللهِ! أنا فِيهِمْ؟ قالَ: أَنْتِ فِيهِمْ، ثُمَّ قالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: أَوَّلُ جَيْشٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَغْزُونَ مَدِينَةَ قَيْصَرَ مَغْفُورٌ لَهُمْ. فَقُلْتُ: أنا فِيهِمْ يا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قالَ: لا»

"The first army of my ummah that will campaign by sea, Paradise will be their due."[2] *Umm Harâm said: I said: O Messenger of Allâh, will I be among them? He said: "You will be among them." Then the Prophet ﷺ said: "The first army of my ummah to attack the city of Caesar*[3] *will be forgiven." I - meaning Umm Harâm - said: Will I be among them, O Messenger of Allâh? He said: "No."*[4]

al-Muhallab[5] said: This hadeeth is praising Mu'âwiyah, because he was the first one to lead a campaign by sea.[6]

Scholars' praise for Mu'âwiyah ﷺ

Praise from 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ

It was said to Ibn 'Abbâs: Can you speak to the *ameer al-mu'mineen* Mu'âwiyah, because he prays Witr with only one

---

[1] *Mawârid al-Zam'ân,* 7/249. Its isnâd is hasan (2278).

[2] *Fath al-Bâri,* 6/121

[3] the city of Caesar: i.e., Constantinople

[4] *al-Bukhâri,* no. 2924

[5] al-Muhallab ibn Ahmad al-Andalusi, the author of *Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhâri,* d. 435 AH.

[6] *Fath al-Bâri,* 6/120

rak'ah? He said: He is a *faqeeh*.[1] There is not enough room to mention all the *fiqhi* issues that were narrated from Mu'âwiyah ﷺ, but there follow a few of them:

- It was narrated that he prayed *Witr* with one *rak'ah.*
- It was narrated that he prayed for rain *(istisqa')* by virtue of someone who appeared to be righteous.[2]
- Half a *sâ'* of wheat is sufficient as *zakât al-fitr*.[3]
- It is *mustahabb* to perfume the body when wanting to enter *ihrâm*.[4]
- It is permissible to buy and sell the houses of Makkah.[5]
- A husband and wife may be separated because of impotence.
- A divorce uttered by a man who is drunk counts as such.
- A Muslim should not be killed in retaliation *(qisâs)* for a kâfir.
- A killer may be detained until the son of his victim reaches maturity (and can decide what should be done).[6]

Praise from 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Mubârak for Mu'âwiyah ﷺ

'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Mubârak said: Mu'âwiyah is a test for us (i.e., we test people by how they think of Mu'âwiyah). Whoever regards him in a disrespectful manner we would accuse of being against the *Sahâbah*.[7]

Praise from Ahmad ibn Hanbal

Imam Ahmad was asked: What do you say - may Allâh have

---

[1] op. cit., 7/130

[2] *al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudâmah, 3/346

[3] *Zad al-Ma'âd*, 2/19

[4] *al-Mughni*, 5/77

[5] op. cit., 6/366

[6] *Marwiyât Khilâfat Mu'âwiyah fi Tareekh at-Tabari*, by Khâlid al-Ghayth, p. 28

[7] op. cit., p. 29

mercy on you - about one who says: I do not say that Mu'âwiyah is the scribe who wrote down the Revelation and I do not say that he was the maternal uncle of the believers, because he seized power by the sword?[1] Abu 'Abd-Allâh said: This is a reprehensible view; the people who hold such a view should be shunned and the people should be warned against them.[2]

Praise from al-Qâdi Ibn al-'Arabi for Mu'âwiyah ﷺ

Ibn al-'Arabi spoke of attributes that were combined in Mu'âwiyah ﷺ, among which he mentioned: Protecting the Muslim ummah in general, guarding the border posts, strengthening the army, prevailing over the enemy, and dealing with people justly and kindly.[3] Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb commented on this text by noting: Mu'âwiyah's care and concern to protect the ummah from its enemies was so great that he sent word to the king of Byzantium, threatening him, when he was in the midst of fighting with 'Ali at Siffeen, when he heard that the king of Byzantium was approaching the border with a huge army.[4] Concerning that Ibn Katheer said: The king of Byzantium had great hopes of attacking and defeating Mu'âwiyah after having instilled fear in him and humiliating him, and routing his troops. When the king of Byzantium saw that Mu'âwiyah was preoccupied with fighting 'Ali, he approached some cities (on the border) with a huge army, filled with hope of victory. But Mu'âwiyah wrote to him saying: By Allâh, if you do not stop and go back to your own land, O cursed one, I shall reconcile with my cousin and we will unite against you, and I shall certainly expel you from all of your land; I shall keep pursuing you, and the earth, vast as it is, will be straitened for you (cf. At-Tawbah 9:25). At that, the king of Byzantium was afraid, and he sent word seeking a peace treaty.[5]

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *al-Sunnah* by al-Khallâl, ed. by 'Atiyah al-Zahrâni, 2/434

[3] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim*, p. 210

[4] *Marwiyât Khilâfat Mu'âwiyah*, p. 31

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/119

Praise from Ibn Taymiyah for Mu'âwiyah ﷺ

Ibn Taymiyah said concerning him: It is proven in *mutawâtir* reports that Mu'âwiyah was appointed to a position of authority by the Prophet ﷺ as he appointed others, and he fought in *jihad* with him. The Prophet ﷺ regarded him as honest and trustworthy; he used to write down the Revelation for him and he never had any doubts concerning his writing down of the Revelation. He was appointed as a governor by 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ, who was one of the best judges of character. Allâh caused truth to be uttered on his lips and to fill his heart and he never accused him of anything with regard to his governorship.[1]

Praise from Ibn Katheer

Ibn Katheer said concerning him: All the Muslims unanimously agreed to swear allegiance to him in 41 AH, and he remained in charge throughout this period until the year in which he died. Throughout this period *jihad* was ongoing in the lands of the enemies, and the word of Allâh remained supreme, and booty was coming to him from the ends of the earth; the Muslims were at ease, enjoying justice, tolerance and goodwill. He also said: He was forbearing[2] , dignified, a leader, prominent among people, noble, just, and a man of chivalry.[3] He also said: He was a man of good conduct, forgiving, tolerant and overlooking the mistakes of others, may Allâh have mercy on him.[4]

His narration of *hadeeth*

Mu'âwiyah ﷺ is regarded as one of those who had the honour of narrating hadeeth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, the reason

[1] *al-Fatâwa*, 4/472; *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/122; *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/129

[2] Ibn Abi'l-Dunya and Abu Bakr ibn Abi 'Aasim wrote books about the forbearance of Mu'âwiyah.

[3] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/118

[4] op. cit., 8/126

being that he stayed close to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ after the conquest of Makkah, because he was his brother-in-law and his scribe. Mu'âwiyah narrated one hundred and sixty three (163) *ahâdeeth* from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, four of which were narrated by both al-Bukhâri and Muslim; al-Bukhâri alone narrated a further four and Muslim five.[1] Mu'âwiyah's conduct towards the people during his governorship was among the best of any governor, which made the people love him. It is proven in *al-Saheeh* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

«خِيَارُ أَئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَكُمْ، وَتُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَشِرَارُ أَئِمَّتِكُمُ الَّذِينَ تُبْغِضُونَهُمْ وَيُبْغِضُونَكُمْ، وَتَلْعَنُونَهُمْ وَيَلْعَنُونَكُمْ»

"The best of your leaders - or rulers - are those whom you love and who love you, and you pray for them and they pray for you; the worst of your rulers are those whom you hate and who hate you, and you curse them and they curse you."[2]

I will conclude my discussion of Mu'âwiyah by noting what was said about him by al-Qâdi Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi: 'Umar made him the governor of all the provinces of Syria and 'Uthmân approved of his governorship. Indeed, Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq appointed him because he was the heir of his brother Yazeed, and Yazeed had appointed him to succeed him. 'Umar then approved of his position because he had been a governor during Abu Bakr's reign, as Yazeed had passed the position on to Mu'âwiyah, and 'Uthmân approved of and confirmed 'Umar's decision. Look at this series of approvals and how strong it is.[3] It was proven that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ appointed him as a scribe, so he had a track record of working for the Islamic state that no one else, before or after him, had. He was appointed by the Messenger of

[1] *Marwiyât Khilâfat Mu'âwiyah fi Tareekh at-Tabari*, p. 33

[2] Muslim, *Kitâb al-Imârah*, no. 65 (1855)

[3] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim*, p. 83

Allâh ﷺ and by the three caliphs who came after him, and al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, the grandson of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, made a peace deal with him and approved of his becoming caliph.[1]

'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz

His full name was 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manâf ibn Qusay al-Qurashi al-'Abshami.[2]

He was born at the time of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in 4 AH.[3] When the Messenger ﷺ performed 'Umrah in 7 AH to make up for the 'Umrah that he had not been able to complete previously, he entered Makkah and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was brought to him. Ibn Hajar said: He smacked his lips and yawned, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spat into his mouth and said: "Is this the son of the Sulami woman?" They said: Yes. He said: "He looks like us." He spat into his mouth and sought refuge with Allâh for him, and the child swallowed the saliva of the Prophet ﷺ. He said: He will be a finder of water, and he did not dig in any land but water appeared to him.[4]

'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was not appointed to any administrative or military post until he became governor of Basra in 29 AH/649 CE. He was the nephew (son of maternal uncle) of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ, because the mother of 'Uthmân was Arwa bint Kurayz ibn Rabee'ah, and the mother of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was from Banu Sulaym.[5]

When he was appointed governor of Basra, he was twenty-four or twenty-five years old.[6] He remained governor of Basra until the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ was killed, when he gathered a huge

[1] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam wa'l-Asr al-Râshidi*, 2/216

[2] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/91

[3] *Tahdheeb al-Tahdheeb*, 5/272

[4] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/19; *Tahdheeb al-Tahdheeb*, 5/273; *Asad al-Ghâbah*, 3/293, no. 3031.

[5] *Al-Tabaqât*, 5/31; *Tahdheeb al-Tahdheeb*, 5/272

[6] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/91

army and took whatever wealth he had with him, and marched to Makkah where he joined az-Zubayr. Then he came back to Basra and was present at the Battle of the Camel, but he was not present at the battle of Siffeen, even though al-Qalqashandi said that he was on Mu'âwiyah's side in the arbitration at Siffeen.[1] During the caliphate of Mu'âwiyah he was appointed as governor of Basra for three years, then he was dismissed. He settled in Madînah, and died there in 57 AH.[2] According to a report narrated by Ibn Qutaybah, he died in Makkah and was buried in 'Arafât in 59 AH.[3] Ibn Sa'd praised him, saying: 'Abd-Allâh was noble and generous; he had a lot of wealth and children and he loved development.[4] Ibn Hajar said concerning him: He was very generous, brave and courageous.[5] He was regarded as one of the most generous people of Basra[6] , and as one of the most generous of the Muslims.[7] 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir left his mark during the conquests; he managed to dash the hopes of the Persians completely, when he demolished the last hopes of ancient Persian aspirations. That was when he finished off the last of their kings, Yazdagird ibn Shahriyân ibn Kisra and Kharazâd Mahr the brother of Rustam, who led the Persian opposition against the Muslims.

In addition to his genius in military matters, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir also took an interest in Islamic knowledge. It is narrated that he narrated a hadeeth from the Prophet ﷺ. Ibn Qutaybah said: He only narrated one hadeeth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ[8] , but it was not narrated in any of the six books.[9] As for the

[1] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, p. 128

[2] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/21

[3] *al-Ma'ârif* by Ibn Qutaybah, p. 321

[4] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, p. 129

[5] *Tahdheeb al-Tahdheeb*, 5/272

[6] *al-'Aqd al-Fareed*, 1/293, 294

[7] *Subh al-A'shi fi Sinâ'at al-Insha'* by Abu'l-'Abbâs al-Qalqashandi, 1/450, 451

[8] *al-Ma'ârif*, p. 321

[9] ibid.

hadeeth which he narrated, it was narrated by Ibn Qâni' and Ibn Mandah via Mus'ab az-Zubayri: My father narrated to me from my grandfather Mus'ab ibn Thâbit, from Hanzalah ibn Qays, from 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«مَنْ قُتِلَ دُونَ مَالِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ»

"Whoever is killed defending his wealth is a martyr."[1]

His economic developments in Basra

A number of economic developments in Basra are connected to the name of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, and they are no less important than his brilliant military achievements that are represented in his numerous victories over the Magians, his pursuit of their remnants and his destruction of all Yazdagird's hopes. His economic reforms are represented in his concern about the market of Basra, as he bought (the land for) this marketplace with his own wealth and gave it to the people of the city.[2] The market was in the middle of Basra, based on the evidence mentioned by Khaleefah ibn Khayyât, that the market stood on the banks of the river which is in the middle of Basra. This was an excellent choice, because it made the market an important centre in the middle of the city.

Perhaps the most important of his developments in Basra was in the field of irrigation, as Ibn 'Aamir was deeply concerned with this issue. Ibn Qutaybah stated that Ibn 'Aamir dug two channels in Basra, one in the east and another that was known as Umm 'Abd-Allâh and was named after the mother of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir.[3] 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ordered Ziyâd ibn Abi Sufyân

---

[1] *al-Hâkim in al-Mustadrak,* 3/639 (6753). Its isnâd is *da'eef* (weak), but there is supporting evidence on this topic.

[2] *At-Tabaqât al-Kubra,* 5/73; *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi* is the main source for my biography of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, where I benefited from the work of Professor Muhammad Hamâdi, may Allâh reward him with good.

[3] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi,* no. 21, Muhammad Hamâdi, p. 134

to dig a channel in Abillah, as Ziyâd had been appointed in charge of the diwan and the *bayt al-mâl* by 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, and he would leave him in charge of Basra in his stead when he went out on conquests.[1] Khaleefah ibn Khayyât stated that Ziyâd dug the channel in Abillah until it reached the foot of the mountain, and the one who dug it for Ziyâd was 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Abi Bakrah.[2] When the water began to flow, 'Abd al-Rahmân spurred on his horse (racing the water) until the water nearly beat him.[3] 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir also dug a cistern that was named after his mother, which was the cistern of Umm 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir in Basra.[4] Al-Balâdhuri mentioned that 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir dug a channel, and he appointed his freed slave Nâfidh to dig it, so it was named after him and became known as Nahr Nâfidh (the channel of Nâfidh).[5] There was also the channel of Murrah, which Ibn 'Aamir ordered Murrah, the freed slave of Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq ﷺ to dig, so it was named after him.[6] And there was the channel of al-Asâwirah which 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir dug for them. Al-Balâdhuri mentions the bridge of Qurrah in Basra, and said: The bridge of Qurrah was named after Qurrah ibn Hayyân al-Bâhili. There was an ancient channel there, then it was bought by the mother of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir[7] , who gave it in charity as a source of water for the people of Basra.[8]

From the above it is clear that 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was concerned with digging channels so that agriculture, which is the foundation of economic life, would flourish, in addition to Basra's strategic location with regard to trade routes and its military importance as a base for the Islamic conquests in the east. We may

---

[1] *Futooh al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, p. 351

[2] *Tareekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, 1/142

[3] *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 351

[4] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Aamir, p. 134

[5] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, p. 135; *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 354

[6] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, p. 136; *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 354

[7] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, p. 136

[8] *Futooh al-Buldân*, p. 353, 354

note how keen 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was to implement reforms from his words: If I had the opportunity, I would develop the land to such an extent that a woman could go out on her mount, coming to water and a market every day until she reached Makkah.[1]

In fact his developments were no less important than the conquests that he achieved in the east. Basra was the caliphate's military base in its conquests of the east. Dr. Sâlih al-'Ali noted that the widespread conquests led to an increase in income for Basra and the spread of economic prosperity in the city, which encouraged merchants and businessmen to flock there, thus civil life developed quickly in Basra.[2]

The financial situation in the province of Basra was in very good shape as the result of the far-reaching conquests in the east, plus the economic and trade activity in Basra and its stability and security. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was a humble man whose door was open to all people, to such an extent that he rebuked his gatekeeper and told him not to lock the gate by night or by day.[3] In fact Ibn 'Aamir became very well known in Basra. Ibn Sa'd said: The people used to say: Ibn 'Aamir said such and such, and Ibn 'Aamir did such and such[4], as the result of his developments and his good conduct, so the people loved him more and more.[5] Ibn 'Aamir remained governor of Basra until the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ was murdered.[6]

'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was one of the governors of 'Uthmân. He is the one who dug the channels of Basra, and was the first one to build cisterns in 'Arafât and bring water to them.[7] He is the

---

[1] *al-Ma'ârif* by Ibn Qutaybah, p. 321

[2] *al-Tanzeemât al-Ijtimâ'iyyah wa'l-Iqtisâdiyyah*, p. 30, 31

[3] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, Muhammad Hamâdi, p. 138

[4] *al-Tabaqât*, 5/33

[5] *Majallat al-Mu'ârikh al-'Arabi*, no. 21, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, Muhammad Hamâdi, p. 138

[6] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/91

[7] ibid.

man who did so many good deeds and was so loved by the people that no one can deny it, as Ibn Taymiyah said.[1] Al-Dhahabi said concerning him: He was one of the great Arab leaders and one of the most courageous and generous, and he was kind and forbearing.[2]

al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah

His full name was al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'eet ibn Abi 'Amr ibn Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manâf, the ameer Abu Wahb al-Umawi. He was a companion of the Prophet ﷺ but not for long.[3] He was the half-brother of 'Uthmân through his mother.

Al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah was one of the men employed by the Islamic state at the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who chose trustworthy and qualified men to work for the state. That was one of the main causes for the rapid and large-scale spread of Islam during their reigns. He was regarded as trusted and reliable by both of these two caliphs, one of those to whom important tasks could be entrusted, because they saw that he was qualified and that his faith was sincere.[4] The first task he undertook during the caliphate of Abu Bakr was when he was entrusted with secrets in the exchange of correspondence between the caliph and his commander Khâlid ibn al-Waleed during the battle of al-Madhâr against the Persians in 12 AH.[5] Then he sent him with reinforcements to his commander 'Iyâd ibn Ghanam al-Fihri.[6] In 13 AH, al-Waleed was appointed by Abu Bakr to collect zakâh from the tribe of Qadâ'ah, then when Abu Bakr decided to conquer Syria, al-Waleed was equal in his view to 'Amr ibn al-'Aas in respect, trustworthiness and honour. He wrote to 'Amr

[1] *Minhâj al-Sunnah*, 3/189, 190

[2] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/21

[3] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/412, 413

[4] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, by Muhammad Sâlih al-Gharsi, p. 78

[5] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 4/168

[6] op. cit., 4/194

ibn al-'Aas and al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah calling them to lead the troops in *jihad*. Ibn al-'Aas marched under the banner of Islam to Palestine, and al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah led his troops to the east of Jordan.[1] Then in 15 AH, during the caliphate of 'Umar, we see al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah serving as governor of the tribe of Banu Taghlib and the Arabs of al-Jazeerah.[2] During this governorship he guarded the backs of the *mujâhideen* in Syria lest an attack come from behind. When he was appointed governor of that region which was still full of Christians, al-Waleed took the opportunity as part of his *jihad* effort and administrative work to call people to Allâh using wisdom and beautiful preaching, to encourage the Christians of Iyâd and Taghlib to enter Islam.[3] It is this remarkable past that al-Waleed brought to the caliphate of 'Uthmân, so he appointed him as governor of Kufah and he was one of its best governors, ruling it with justice and kindness. During the period of his governorship of Kufah, his armies would march to the eastern horizons, conquering the land, as was testified in his absence by one of the greatest of Muslim judges that history has ever known in terms of his knowledge, virtue and fairness, the great Tâbi'i Imam al-Sha'bi.[4] He praised his military campaigns and his governorship when he said, when the campaigns of Maslamah ibn 'Abd al-Malik[5] were mentioned to him: If only you had seen al-Waleed and his campaigns and his governorship, for he would go out on campaign and reach such and such a place, and he never fell short or was accused of falling short by anyone until he was dismissed from his post.[6] Al-Waleed was one of the most beloved of people to the people, and one of the kindest to them. For five years there was no gate at his

[1] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 78

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/28, 29

[3] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 78

[4] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 78

[5] Maslamah ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwân, one of the leaders of conquest, d. 120 AH

[6] *at-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân*, p. 40

house.[1] 'Uthmân said: I did not appoint al-Waleed because he is my brother, rather I appointed him because he is the son of Umm Hakeem al-Bayda', the paternal aunt of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and the twin sister of his father. Appointing someone as a governor is done at the discretion of the caliph. 'Umar dismissed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs and appointed someone of lesser status in his place.[2]

The one who studies the life of this great *Sahâbi* and hero of Islam who was trusted by these three Rightly-Guided Caliphs will have no doubt that he was definitely qualified to be a governor. Rather the doubts were stirred up because of what was said concerning the reason for the revelation of a verse in which they alleged that he was described as an evildoer *(fâsiq)* and because of the accusation that he was a wine-drinker. These are matters which need further discussion, and we shall examine these two issues here.[3]

Is it proven that the verse 'If a *Fâsiq* (liar — evil person) comes to you' was revealed concerning him?

Allâh says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓاْ أَن تُصِيبُواْ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُواْ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَٰدِمِينَ﴾

"O you who believe! If a Fâsiq (liar – evil person) comes to you with any news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done" (*Al-Hujurât* 49:6)

The narrators transmitted a story concerning this verse which says that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah to Banu'l-Mustaliq to collect zakâh, and he reported that they had apostatized and refused to pay the zakâh. That was because they

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/251

[2] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsm,* p. 86

[3] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb,* p. 79

had come out to meet him and he grew alarmed and did not know what they were up to, so he left and reported that they had apostatized. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent Khâlid ibn al-Waleed to them and told him to find out what they were doing. They told him that they were adhering to Islam, and this verse was revealed.[1] There are numerous reports concerning this but the story has no sound, *mawsool* (uninterrupted) *isnâd*.[2] The least that can be said about the isnâd of this story is that it is *da'eef* (weak). Even if they accept weak *isnâds* with regard to encouraging good deeds that do not make a forbidden thing permissible or make a permissible thing forbidden, we cannot accept a weak isnâd in the story of al-Waleed, because that is making a forbidden thing permissible, which is describing a man who was a companion of the Messenger ﷺ - if only for one day - as an evildoer *(fâsiq)*. How can we accept the weak *isnâd* when the verse itself enjoins establishing proof before accepting reports? This verse forms the foundation for the entire science of collecting and verifying reports.[3]

The story of al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah and what they attributed to him cannot be accepted unless it is sound in both *isnâd* and *matn* (text), because they are describing him as an evildoer, and this is an accusation which cannot be easily accepted even if it is made against an ordinary man in the modern age, fifteen hundred years later, so how can we take these reports lightly if they are accusing a man who lived at the time of the Prophet ﷺ and the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and they entrusted important tasks to him?

This story represents part of the early history of Islam and parts of the story have to do with matters of 'aqeedah. Such reports of Islamic history cannot be taken lightly, as may be the case with reports on civil developments. Moreover, al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah was one of those who became Muslim after the conquest

[1] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/176

[2] *al-Madînah an-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/176

[3] op. cit., 2/182

of Makkah, and aspersions are often cast on the Islam of this group. Some historians claim that they became Muslim reluctantly and that faith did not truly enter their hearts. This is a claim that is undoubtedly false.[1] The narrators added things to the story of al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, motivated by political or sectarian whims and desires, and they introduced fabricated material into this story. The narrators competed in proving their ability to fabricate material and demonstrate their talents in the area of fiction.[2]

What undermines the report about al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah being sent to collect the zakâh of Banu'l-Mustaliq and contradicts it is the hadeeth which has a sound, uninterrupted isnâd composed of trustworthy men, which states that at the time of the conquest of Makkah al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah was a young man, and the Prophet ﷺ would not have sent a man of his age as an agent. It was narrated from Fayâd ibn Muhammad al-Raqqi, from Ja'far ibn Barqân, from Thâbit ibn al-*Hajj*âj al-Kilâbi, from 'Abd-Allâh al-Hamadhâni (Abu Moosa) that al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah said: When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ conquered Makkah, the people of Makkah started to bring their children to him and he patted their heads and prayed for them. I was brought to him, and I had been perfumed with *khulooq*, and he did not pat me on the head, and the only thing that stopped him from doing that was the fact that my mother had perfumed me with *khulooq*, so he did not touch me because of the *khulooq*.[3]

This story was taken too far due to sectarian whims and desires. Al-Waleed was Umawi, a relative of 'Uthmân. The one who inserted the name of al-Waleed into the story about the reason for the revelation of the verse was a Shi'i Râfidi by the name of Muhammad ibn al-Sâ'ib al-Kalbi, of whom Ibn Hajar said: He is regarded as one of the Shi'ah of Kufah. Ibn Hajar said: There were two liars in Kufah, one of whom was al-Kalbi, and the

[1] op. cit., 2/173

[2] ibid.

[3] *Musnad Ahmad*, 4/32

other was al-Saddi.[1] He chose him for this story because it had to do with the collection of zakâh and al-Waleed collected zakâh from the tribe of Qudâ'ah at the time of Abu Bakr, and he collected zakâh from the tribe of Taghlib in al-Jazeerah at the time of 'Umar. The books of the Shi'ah criticize 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân on the basis of the story of al-Waleed.[2] We do not deny that the verse was revealed in the context of the story of Banu'l-Mustaliq, but what we do deny is that al-Waleed is the one who is described as a fâsiq in the verse, because the wording "If a *Fâsiq* (liar — evil person) comes to you" is indefinite, which indicates that it is general in meaning and does not refer to a specific case, because if the indefinite is used in a conditional phrase, it is general in meaning.

The *hadd* punishment of al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah for drinking wine

With regard to the *hadd* punishment of al-Waleed for drinking wine, it is proven in *al-Saheehayn* that 'Uthmân punished him thus after the witnesses testified against him. But this is not a reason to pick on 'Uthmân, rather it is one of the virtues of 'Uthmân that he carried out the *hadd* punishment on him and dismissed him from his post in Kufah. Al-Bukhâri narrated this incident under the chapter heading *The Virtues of 'Uthmân.* [3] 'Ali ﷺ said: When you criticize 'Uthmân, it is like someone who stabs himself in order to kill someone behind him.[4] What fault is it of 'Uthmân's if he carried out the *hadd* punishment on a man because of his deeds and dismissed him from his post? What fault is it of 'Uthmân for what he did following our advice?[5] Moreover, this did not happen only during the reign of 'Uthmân; there was a precedent at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ, as it was stated that

[1] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam,* 2/179

[2] op. cit., 2/180

[3] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb Manâqib 'Uthmân*

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/278

[5] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah fi'l-Fiqh,* 1/421

Qudâmah ibn Maz'oon, who had met the Prophet ﷺ, drank alcohol when he was 'Umar's governor in Bahrain, and he carried out the *hadd* punishment on him and dismissed him.[1]

Some historians stated that there was no proof that al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah drank wine. Al-Hâfiz said in *al-Isâbah*: It was said that some of the people of Kufah ganged up on him and testified against him unlawfully.[2] This was also referred to by Ibn Khaldoon who said: Rumours - against the agents of 'Uthmân - stirred up by the troublemakers continued to spread, and al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, who was the governor of Kufah, was accused of drinking wine, and a number of them bore witness against him, so 'Uthmân imposed the *hadd* punishment on him and dismissed him.[3] At-Tabari narrated some further details: the sons of Abu Zaynab, Abu Muwarra' and Jundub ibn Zuhayr broke into the house of Ibn al-Haysamân and killed him. The Sahâbi Abu Shurayh al-Khuzâ'i and his son, who were neighbours of Ibn al-Haysamân, testified against them concerning that and al-Waleed executed them in retaliation *(qisâs)*. Their fathers took it upon themselves to plot against al-Waleed, so they started to watch his movements. Abu Zubayd the poet came to visit him; he was a (former) Christian, one of his maternal uncles from Banu Taghlib, who had become Muslim at the hands of al-Waleed. The guest was accused of drinking wine, and some of the foolish people started accusing al-Waleed because he was very close to Abu Zubayd. Thus Abu Zaynab and Abu Muwarra' found their opportunity; they went to Madînah and came to 'Uthmân, testifying that al-Waleed had drunk wine and that they had seen him vomiting the wine. 'Uthmân said: He would not have vomited the wine unless he had drunk it. Al-Waleed was brought from Kufah and he swore an oath to 'Uthmân and told him about them, but 'Uthmân said: We will carry out the *hadd* punishment

[1] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim*, p. 93

[2] *al-Isâbah*, 3/638

[3] *Tareekh Ibn Khaldoon*, 2/473; *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 81

(enjoined by) Allâh and let the one who bears false witness dwell in Hell; be patient, O my brother.[1]

Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb said: As for the additional material that is narrated in the report of Muslim, that someone came to al-Waleed when he had prayed *Fajr* with two *rak'ahs* and he said: Do you want more? - and according to some of the reports narrated by Ahmad, he had prayed four *rak'ahs* - nothing was proven from the testimony of witnesses. These are the words of Hudayn the narrator of the story, but Hudayn was not one of the witnesses and he did not narrate it from any witness or from any known person. He was not in Kufah at the time of the alleged incident and this part of the report carries no weight.[2]

This was 'Uthmân's governor in Kufah, al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah, the *mujâhid* and conqueror, the just man who was wronged, who did all he could for the *ummah* of good works, then he saw with his own eyes how the evildoers mistreat the righteous and how their false accusations affect them. So after the murder of 'Uthmân he isolated himself from the hustle and bustle of society in a piece of land that had been allocated to him, fifteen miles from the city of al-Riqqah in al-Jazeerah where he had striven in *jihad* and called people to Islam during the caliphate of 'Umar.[3] He kept away from all the wars that took place during the times of 'Ali and Mu'âwiyah (ﷺ) until he died in his land, and was buried there in 61 AH. And it was said that he died during Mu'âwiyah's reign.[4]

Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas

His full name was Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas ibn Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manâf, al-Qurashi al-Umawi.[5] Abu Hâtim said: He was a companion of the Prophet ﷺ, and he was governor of

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/277

[2] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim*, p. 96, 97

[3] op. cit., p/ 94

[4] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/216

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/87

Kufah after al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah. He was one of the most eloquent men of Quraysh, hence 'Uthmân chose him as one of those whom he appointed to write down the Qur'ân. It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik said:... 'Uthmân ordered Zayd ibn Thâbit, 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn al-Hârith ibn Hishâm to make copies of it (the manuscript) in *Mush-hafs*. 'Uthmân said to the three Qurashi men: If you and Zayd ibn Thâbit differ concerning anything in the Qur'ân, write it in the dialect of Quraysh.[1] The Arabic of the Qur'ân was based on the dialect of Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas, because it was the closest to the speech of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He was a companion for seven years. His father was killed as a *mushrik* at the battle of Badr by 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib.[2]

Let us read these reports which point to the strength of his faith: it was narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb said to Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas: I did not kill your father; rather I killed my maternal uncle al-'Aas ibn Hishâm. Sa'eed said: Even if you had killed him, you would have been in the right, and he would have been in the wrong. 'Umar was amazed at his response. During the days of his governorship in Kufah, he attacked Tabaristan and conquered it, and he attacked Jarjân; in his army were Hudhayfah and other Sahâbah.[3] He was famous for his kindness and generosity, to such a point that a beggar asked him for something at a time when he did not have anything, but he wrote down what he wanted to give him, and put it in writing.[4] He loved to unite the Muslims and hated *fitnah*, from which he would flee. 'Uthmân appointed him governor of Kufah after al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah. He came to Madînah on one occasion, and when he returned, the troublemakers had rallied their troops and prevented him from entering the city, so he went back and stayed in Madînah. Among those who prevented him from returning to his province were the

[1] al-Bukhâri, *Kitâb Fadâ'il al-Qur'ân*, no. 4987

[2] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/211

[3] ibid.

[4] *al-Isâbah*, 3268

killers of 'Uthmân, but despite that he stayed away from the Battle of the Camel and Siffeen, and he urged those who were involved in the Battle of the Camel not to go out and fight.[1] This was his manner of conduct: generosity, courage, righteousness, *jihad*, and eloquence that was most akin to the eloquence of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He dictated to Zayd ibn Thâbit this *Mus-haf* that we still read today. Think about these attributes that are proven in saheeh reports, and compare them with the bad qualities that are mentioned in reports that have no basis. Think about those who fabricated and spread those bad reports, and you will realize that they are fabrications, because they combine contradictory qualities in one man: generosity and miserliness, righteousness and evildoing, knowledge and ignorance, going out for *jihad* and reluctance to go out. It is impossible for these characteristics to be combined in one person.[2] The reporters claim, without any *isnâd*, that when Sa'eed was appointed governor of Kufah after al-Waleed, some of the slaves said in *rajaz* verse:

Woe to us! Al-Waleed has been dismissed

And Sa'eed, who is going to starve us, has been appointed

He will decrease our stipends and not increase them.[3]

This is a fabrication, an undoubtedly made-up story.[4] Because the slaves in 30 AH - i.e., the prisoners of war who had become slaves - could not speak Arabic well, let alone compose poetry, and because Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas was well known for his generosity and righteousness, and he could not be described as someone who would starve people. If the people and poets praised al-Waleed for his generosity, then Sa'eed set an example by his generosity.[5] He was described as a vessel of honey, and al-Farazdaq wrote poetry praising the generosity of Sa'eed.

---

[1] *al-Tabaqât,* 5/34

[2] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam,* 2/212

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/279

[4] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam,* 2/212

[5] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/279

If the slaves came up with these lines of rajaz verse at the beginning of Sa'eed's governorship in Kufah, how could they have known his policies or whether he had come to starve the people or give them their fill? What is strange is that the narrators mention this report in a context that contradicts itself, as they said: 'Uthmân appointed Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas as governor of Kufah and he came to them and was fair to them, but some of the slaves said (these lines of *rajaz* verse).[1] How could he be fair and yet be described as causing the slaves to starve? There was an abundance of food with enough for everyone and more, and his fair governorship would ensure that this goodness reached everyone.[2] May Allâh have mercy on the classical historians, for they thought highly of their readers and they compiled contradictory reports in their books, thinking that their readers throughout the ages would be able to distinguish the sound reports from the suspect ones. Their excuse was that they were writing for the people of their own era, and they did not realize that the coming centuries would be filled with people who would not be able to distinguish between reports.[3] In his biography of Sa'eed, Ibn Sa'd narrated without an isnâd: They said: When Sa'eed came to Kufah as a governor, he came as a young man who had lived a life of luxury and had no prior experience. He said: I will not ascend the minbar until it has been purified, and he issued orders that it be washed. Then he said from the minbar: All of this Sawâd is a garden belonging to some young men of Quraysh, and they complained to 'Uthmân.[4] This report is not sound because it has no isnâd, and because Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas, who led armies of *jihad* and conquest, was not as they described. Moreover, Ibn Sa'd narrated this alleged statement of Sa'eed from al-Ashtar Mâlik ibn al-Hârith when he prevented Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas from entering Kufah after many years of his being its

[1] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/213

[2] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/213; *al-Tabaqât*, 5/32

[3] op. cit, 2/214

[4] op. cit., 2/214

governor, when al-Ashtar said: This Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas had come to you claiming that this Sawâd is a garden belonging to some young men of Quraysh, but al-Sawâd is the place where you were born, the place where you settled and the place where you and your fathers acquired *fay'* (booty).[1]

Mâlik ibn al-Hârith, who was known as al-Ashtar, was a man of *fitnah*. He was one of the leaders of the rebels who besieged 'Uthmân and killed him. It is no wonder that these people fabricated words to stir up hatred. Even if these words were uttered, those who said them were those who rebelled against the caliphate, because they understood it in this negative manner because the governors in Iraq - especially Kufah - were all from Quraysh, and tribalism is obvious in these words.[2] Imam al-Dhahabi said concerning him: He was a noble and generous governor, praiseworthy, forbearing, dignified, decisive and wise, a man who was fit to be a governor.[3] As for the rebels and those who criticized 'Uthmân ﷺ for appointing Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas as governor of Kufah and claimed that he behaved in such a way that it led the people of Kufah to expel him[4] , the mere fact that the people of Kufah expelled him is not indicative of any fault that would justify such an action. The one who knows anything about Kufah and its ways will be aware of its constant complaints against its governors with no shar'i justification, complaints that were made for the silliest reasons. 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ said of them: I am very tired and no longer know what to do with the people of Kufah; they are not pleased with anyone and no one is pleased with them; they are not good to any governor and no governor could be good for them.[5] According to another report he said: I am tired of the people of Kufah. If I appoint a lenient man over them they will take advantage of him, and if I appoint a

[1] op. cit., 2/214

[2] ibid

[3] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/447

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/279

[5] *al-Ma'rifah wa'l-Tareekh* by al-Fasawi, 2/754

strict man over them they will complain about him.[1] In fact, he prayed against them and said: O Allâh, they have made me confused so make them confused.[2]

Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas was a wise man who said: My visitor has three rights over me: when he comes in, I should welcome him; when he sits down I should make room for him; and when he speaks I should listen to him. And he said to his son: O my son, do favours for the sake of Allâh, if you initiate it without being asked, but if a man comes to you blushing or one who is uncertain comes to you, not knowing if you will give him anything or not, by Allâh, even if you gave him all of your wealth, you would not be able to suffice him. And he also said: O my son, do not joke with a noble man lest it cause him to despise you, or with an ignoble man lest it cause him to lose respect for you. One day a righteous woman entered upon him when he was the governor of Kufah, and he showed her respect and treated her kindly. She said: May Allâh cause you never to need any ignoble man, for a noble man always remembers the favours of others, and if a blessing is taken away from a noble man, may He make you the cause of it being restored to him.

When Sa'eed was dying, his sons gathered and he said to them: Let my companions not miss anything except my presence, and uphold ties with them as I used to do. Keep giving them what I used to give them, and give them enough so that they have no need to ask from others, for when a man needs something he will be in a state of anxiety and will tremble for fear that his request may be rejected. By Allâh, if a man is tossing and turning in his bed, thinking of you as the one who could fulfil his need, that is a greater favour to you than what you give him (i.e., he is doing you the greater favour by thinking positively of you). Then he gave them a great deal of other advice. He died in 58 AH, or it was said that he died in 57 AH or 59 AH.[3]

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*, 1/423

[2] *al-Minhâj* by Ibn Taymiyah, 3/188

[3] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/90

'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh

When mentioning the name of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh and 'Uthmân's appointing him as governor of Egypt, the historians usually say: 'Uthmân appointed as governor of Egypt 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh, his brother through breastfeeding.[1] What is meant by the phrase "his brother through breastfeeding" is an implicit accusation on the part of some historians that 'Uthmân appointed him as governor of Egypt because of this bond of brotherhood. But what this historian said is not correct. In order to refute these people and their implicit criticism against the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ, we will discuss the conduct of this knight of the tribe of Banu 'Aamir ibn Lu'ayy[2] , 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd. He had a great deal of experience and was very familiar with Egypt and the surrounding countries because he had taken part in the conquest of those regions with the army of 'Amr, and because he had been appointed governor of some of those provinces at the time of 'Umar, when he was governor of Upper Egypt.[3] He was also its governor at the beginning of 'Uthmân's caliphate. This qualified him to become the governor of all of Egypt, as he was the best of the candidates for that post after 'Amr ibn al-'Aas, due to his experience. It seems that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd was able to control the *kharâj* of Egypt until it became greater than the *kharâj* that had been collected at the time of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas. The reason for that may be that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd followed a different strategy of expenditure than 'Amr, so the *kharâj* money that was available in Egypt increased.[4]

During his governorship, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd engaged in *jihad* in a number of places and achieved conquests that were of great importance. Among his campaigns was his campaign of conquest in North Africa in 27 AH, during which he killed its king

[1] *al-Kâmil* by Ibn al-Atheer, 3/88

[2] *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 77

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*, p. 418

[4] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/180

Jarjeer. He was accompanied by a number of Sahâbah during those conquests, such as 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and others. The campaign ended with a peace treaty with the Patriarch of North Africa who agreed to pay *jizyah* to the Muslims.[1] Ibn Abi'l-Sarh returned to North Africa and laid a strong foundation for Islam in the region in 33 AH.[2] Another of the most important actions of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh was his campaign in Nubia which was known as *Ghazwat al-Asâwidah* or *Ghazwat al-Habashah* by some historians. This campaign took place in 31 AH, during which there was intense fighting between the Muslims and the Nubian troops, and a number of the Muslims were killed due to the Nubians' skill in archery. This campaign ended with a peace treaty which 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd signed with the Nubians, and imposed a limited form of *jizyah* on them.[3] 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd is rightfully regarded as the first Muslim leader who was able to penetrate Nubia, fight its people and impose the *jizyah* on them, and during his governorship relations between the Nubians and the Muslims remained stable.

Another of the most important military achievements of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd was the campaign of Dhât al-Sawâri', in which the Muslims defeated the Byzantines. The governorship of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd in Egypt was generally well thought of by the Egyptians, and they did not see anything that they disliked. Al-Maqreezi says of him: He remained governor throughout the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ and was well thought of as a governor.[4] Al-Dhahabi said of him: He never transgressed any limits or did anything for which he could be criticized. He was one of the wisest and most generous of men.[5] The province of Egypt was initially quiet and stable, until the troublemakers such as 'Abd-

[1] *Futooh Misr wa Akhbâruha,* p. 183; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/180

[2] *an-Nujoom al-Zahirah,* 1/80

[3] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/181; *Futooh Misr wa Akhbâruha,* p. 188

[4] *al-Khatat,* 1/299

[5] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala',* 3/34

Allâh ibn Saba' managed to get there and start to incite the people. They and those who were influenced by them played a major role in the murder of 'Uthmân, and the situation in Egypt itself became very unstable as the result of the expulsion of its legitimate governor and the usurpation by others in illegitimate ways. During that period they managed to spread hatred in people's hearts against their caliph 'Uthmân as the result of the plots that they fabricated based on the lies that they spread.[1] We shall discuss this below, *in sha Allâh*. When *fitnah* emerged as the result of 'Uthmân's murder, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd withdrew and settled in 'Asqallân or Ramlah in Palestine. Al-Baghawi narrated with a *saheeh isnâd* that Yazeed ibn Abi Habeeb said: Ibn Abi'l-Sarh went to al-Ramlah in Palestine, and one day he said at dawn: O Allâh, make the last of my deeds Fajr (prayer). He did wudoo' and prayed, then he said the *salâm* to his right and was about to say the *salâm* to his left when Allâh took his soul.[2]

Marwân ibn al-Hakam and his father

Marwân ibn al-Hakam was one of the closest of 'Uthmân's relatives to him, and one of those who had the strongest connection to the centre of the caliphate and was in the midst of the events that led to the destruction of Muslim unity at the time of 'Uthmân. He was like the keeper of state secrets, or the ring-bearer of the king.[3] Marwân was certainly not the only advisor of the caliph, as he used to consult the senior and junior Sahâbah, and he was not isolated from the wisest people in Muslim society. Moreover, Marwân was not the advisor who had control of the state in his hand, rather he was no more than a scribe of the caliph, a job whose importance is based on closeness to the caliph and his seal. The claim that he was the cause of 'Uthmân getting into trouble and inciting people against him so that the caliphate would pass to Banu Umayyah is an assumption for which there is

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/186

[2] *al-Isâbah* no. 4711; *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/35

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 117

no evidence. The caliphate did not pass to Banu Umayyah until after a great deal of trouble in which Marwân played no major role. Moreover, 'Uthmân was not a weak character who could be controlled by a scribe to the extent that some narrators imagined.[1] Marwân ibn al-Hakam is not to be blamed for the fact that he did not reach puberty during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, according to scholarly consensus; at most he was ten years old or thereabouts, but he was a Muslim who used to read Qur'ân and learn his religion. Before the turmoil arose, he was not known for anything for which he could be criticized, and 'Uthmân is not to be blamed for appointing him as his scribe. As for getting caught up in the turmoil, that happened to others who were better than Marwân.[2] Moreover, the report about the Prophet ﷺ expelling his father is *da'eef* (weak) in both *isnâd* and text. It was examined by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, who explained why it is weak.[3] It is known that Marwân ibn al-Hakam was very knowledgeable and just. He was one of the leaders of the youth of Quraysh and he became prominent at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. Imam Mâlik testified that he was a *faqeeh*, and quoted his judgements and fatwas as evidence in many places in *al-Muwatta'*, as is narrated in other books of Sunnah that were in circulation among the imams of the Muslims who followed those rulings.[4] Imam Ahmad said: It was said that Marwân was a good judge, and he used to base his opinions on cases judged by 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb.[5] Marwân was one of the most knowledgeable of people about the Qur'ân, and he also narrated some hadeeth, as he narrated from some of the most famous Sahâbah, and some of them narrated from him, as did some of the Tâbi'een.[6] He was keen to learn the Sunnah and act upon it. Al-Layth ibn Sa'd - the *faqeeh* of Egypt - narrated with his

---

[1] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha*, by Hamdi Shaheen, p. 160

[2] *Minhâj as-Sunnah*, 3/197

[3] *Minhâj al-Sunnah*, 3/195, 196

[4] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha*, p. 169

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/260

[6] ibid.

isnâd: Marwân attended a funeral, and when the funeral prayer had been offered, he departed. Abu Hurayrah said: He has acquired one *qirât* and been deprived of one *qirât* (i.e., of reward, as stated in a hadeeth).[1] Marwân was told about that and he came running such that his knees became uncovered, and he sat until he was given permission to enter.[2]

In the Introduction to *Fath al-Bâri* it says: Marwân ibn al-Hakam ibn Abi'l-Aas ibn Umayyah, the paternal cousin of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân; it was said that he had a dream in which he saw the Messenger ﷺ; if it is proven, no attention should be paid to those who spoke against him.[3] Ibn Katheer said: He is a Sahâbi according to many, because he was born during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ.[4] Marwân was governor of Madînah for Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân, and he was very strict towards evildoers, waging war against all signs of extravagance and promiscuity.[5] He was just towards his people, and was very careful to avoid showing favouritism towards his relatives or those among them who tried to take advantage of his position. His brother 'Abd ar-Rahmân slapped a freed slave of the people of Madînah who was working as a wheat-seller during the period when Marwân was governor of Madînah, and the wheat-seller complained to Marwân. He had his brother 'Abd al-Rahmân brought to him, and he made him sit before the wheat-seller and said to him: Slap him. The wheat-seller said: By Allâh, I did not want this, all I wanted was to tell him that he has a governor over him who will support me against him; I forgive you. He said: I will not accept that from you; take your right. He said: By Allâh, I will not slap him, but I give it to you; by Allâh, I will not slap him. Marwân said: By Allâh, I will not accept that. If you want to

---

[1] ibid; *al-Musnad* no. 4453- 4650

[2] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha*, p. 200; *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/260

[3] *Fath al-Bâri*, 2/164; *Abâteel yajib an tuhma min at-Tareekh*, p. 254

[4] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/259

[5] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha*, p. 200

forgive him, either forgive him as a favour to him or for the sake of Allâh. He said: I forgive him for the sake of Allâh. 'Abd al-Rahmân spoke words of poetry criticizing his brother Marwân for that.[1]

This bright picture of Marwân's knowledge, justice, understanding and religious commitment is very different from the hateful picture presented by most historians and narrators who tried hard to distort the image of this man's life. When he was dying they also tried to distort it, and claimed that his wife Umm Khâlid ibn Yazeed ibn Mu'âwiyah suffocated him with a pillow or poisoned him because he had insulted her son - as they claim - in front of a number of people. This story - in addition to containing some contradictory elements - seems at first glance to be a myth fabricated by some old woman, but people started repeating it, either for the sake of empty talk or to try to damage the reputation of a noble family out of envy because of the high level of glory that they had achieved.[2] Was his death natural or did he die of the plague, or was he suffocated by his wife? The contradiction between the reports indicates that the truth is not known. The reports which state that his wife is the one who killed him, either directly or by delegating someone else to do it (namely her slave woman) is not acceptable or reasonable, because this wife was a noble woman from the tribe of 'Abd Shams, and her husband was related to her, and he was a caliph. So she was the wife of a caliph and the mother of a caliph (namely Mu'âwiyah ibn Yazeed ibn Mu'âwiyah), and this is something that a noble woman would never do. Moreover, we do not see any consequences of this assassination - there was no internal fight in the family, no demand for vengeance, and Khâlid retained his status before 'Abd al-Malik. So there was no sufficient motive for the crime of murder.[3] It was narrated from several scholars that he said: The last words that Marwân spoke were: Paradise is due

[1] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha,* p. 200

[2] *'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwân,* by Dr. al-Rees, p. 12

[3] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah al-Muftara 'alayha,* p. 201

to the one who fears the Fire. Engraved on his ring were the words Glory be to Allâh; or it was said: I believe in the Almighty, the Most Merciful.[1] Ibn al-Qayyim said: The reports which criticize al-Waleed and Marwân ibn al-Hakam are false.[2]

Did 'Uthmân show favouritism to any of his relatives at the expense of the Muslims?

If 'Uthmân had wanted to show favouritism to any of his relatives at the expense of the Muslims, his stepson Muhammad ibn Abi Hudhayfah would have been the most likely candidate for favouritism, but the caliph refused to appoint anyone to any position for which he was not qualified.[3] That was not because he disliked him, otherwise he would not have helped him out at his own expense or provided him with a mount and supplies when he asked for his permission to go to Egypt.[4]

As for appointing young men, 'Uthmân ﷺ had the best example in the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He prepared an army to fight the Byzantines at the end of his life, and appointed Usâmah ibn Zayd ﷺ in charge of it.[5] When the Messenger ﷺ died, Abu Bakr insisted ﷺ that the army continue, but some of the Sahâbah wanted to replace Usâmah with an older leader, and they asked 'Umar to speak to Abu Bakr about that. Abu Bakr got angry when he heard this suggestion and said to 'Umar: O 'Umar, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ appointed him and you are telling me to dismiss him?[6] 'Uthmân himself responded to this issue in front of a group of the Sahâbah, when he said: I have not appointed anyone but one who is mature, adult and qualified. These are the people for whom they worked, so ask them about them; these are the people of the city from which they came. Those who come

[1] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 8/262
[2] *al-Manâr al-Muneef*, p. 117; *Fasl al-Khitâb fi Mawâqif al-Ashâb*, p. 77
[3] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*, 1/247
[4] op. cit., 1/247; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/416
[5] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*, 1/427; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/416
[6] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/46

before me appointed people who were younger than them. People said about the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ what they said about me when he appointed Usâmah, is it not so? They said: Yes; the people do not know what they are talking about.[1] 'Ali ﷺ said: 'Uthmân did not appoint anyone but men who were of good character and just, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ appointed 'Itâb ibn Usayd as governor of Makkah when he was twenty years old.[2]

At the time of 'Uthmân, the governors of the regions were not ignorant about matters of *sharee'ah,* and they were not negligent about Islam. Even if they committed some sins, they still did a great job, and their sins are a personal matter which affected them only and had no effect on the Muslim society. We have studied the legacy of these governors and their deeds, and we have found that it is of great benefit for Islam and the Muslims. Hundreds and thousands of people were guided to Islam at the hands of 'Uthmân's governors, and because of their conquests huge swaths of land were added to the Muslim state. Even if they had not had religious commitment and courage that motivated them to engage in *jihad,* they would not have led their armies to *jihad* in which there is the possibility of death and leaving behind a worldly life of ease and pleasure. We have studied the biographies of these governors, and we have found that each one of them had one or more conquests to his name in the regions neighbouring his province, in addition to the virtues that qualified them for these positions of leadership.[3]

The one who examines the sound reports about the events of history and studies the biographies of the men whose help 'Uthmân sought and the beautiful legacy of their *jihad* in the history of da'wah, and the results of their good management in the prosperity and tranquillity of this ummah cannot but express his admiration and pride the more he examines this era of Islamic history.[4]

---

[1] op. cit., 5/355

[2] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 8/178

[3] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam,* 2/112

[4] *Hâshiyat al-Muttaqi min Minhâj al-I'tidâl,* p. 390

'Uthmân and his governors were preoccupied with fighting the enemy, striving against them and repelling them, but that did not prevent them from expanding the territory of the Islamic state and carrying its influence into new lands. The governors had a direct impact on the events of turmoil, as accusations were made against them saying that they had transgressed against the people, but there was no proof for these accusations. 'Uthmân was accused of appointing his relatives, but we have refuted this accusation. Thus we can see that 'Uthmân did not spare any effort to do that which was in the best interests of the ummah by appointing those who were qualified. Nevertheless, 'Uthmân and his governors were not spared the accusations made against them by troublemakers at that time, just as 'Uthmân was not spared the unfair accusations of many researchers whose research methods are poor, especially modern researchers who have issued judgements based on poor research or specific events for which they did not rely on authentic sources, and quoted weak Râfidi reports and reached false and unfair conclusions about the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, such as Taha Hussein in his book *al-Fitnah al-Kubra,* Râdi 'Abd al-Raheem in *al-Nizâm al-Idâri wa'l-Harbi,* Subhi al-Sâlih in *al-Nuzum al-Islamiyyah,* Mawlawi Husayn in *al-Idârah al-'Arabiyyah,* Subhi Mahmasâni in *Turâth al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen fi'l-Fiqh wa'l-Qada',* Tawfeeq Yuzbaki in *Dirâsât fi'l-Nuzum al-'Arabiyah wa'l-Islamiyyah,* Muhammad al-Mulhim in *Tareekh al-Bahrain fi'l-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijri,* Badawi 'Abd al-Lateef in *al-Ahzâb al-Siyâsiyyah fi Fajr al-Islam,* Anwar al-Rifâ'i in *al-Nuzum al-Islamiyyah,* Muhammad al-Rayyis in *al-Nazariyât al-Siyâsiyyah,* 'Ali Husni al-Kharbooti in *al-Islam wa'l-Khilâfah,* Abu'l-A'la al-Mawdoodi in *al-Mulk wa'l-Khilâfah* and Sayyid Qutb in *al-'Adâlah al-Ijtimâ'iyyah.*

'Uthmân was indeed the caliph who was wronged, as his earliest opponents fabricated lies against him and later historians did not deal fairly with him.[1]

---

[1] *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/222-223

The true nature of the relationship between Abu Dharr al-Ghifâri and 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (ﷺ)

Summary of the story

Those who hated 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân criticized him for banishing Abu Dharr to al-Ribdhah, and some historians claim that Ibn al-Sawda' ('Abd-Allâh ibn Saba') met Abu Dharr in Syria and convinced him to follow the path of asceticism and kindness to the poor, believing it to be obligatory to give in charity whatever was surplus to one's needs, and he led him to criticize Mu'âwiyah. 'Ubâdah ibn al-Sâmit took him to Mu'âwiyah and he said to him: This by Allâh is the one who sent Abu Dharr to you. So Mu'âwiyah expelled him from Syria.[1] Ahmad Ameen tried to find similarities between the view of Abu Dharr and the view of the Persian Mazdak, and he said that the similarity was that Ibn Saba' had lived in Yemen and visited Iraq, and the Persians had been in Yemen and Iraq before Islam, so it was possible that he had taken this idea from the followers of Mazdak in Iraq, and Abu Dharr had embraced these ideas with good intentions.[2]

---

[1] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/216, 217

[2] *Fajr al-Islam*, p. 110

All that is said in the story of Abu Dharr that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân is criticized for, is false and is not based on any sound report. All that is said about Abu Dharr's contact with Ibn Saba' is undoubtedly false.[1] The truth of the matter is that Abu Dharr ؓ went to al-Ribdhah voluntarily and that was based on his understanding of a verse which differed from the understanding of other Sahâbah, but he insisted on his view and no one else agreed with him, so he asked for permission to go and live in al-Ribdhah[2] , which he used to frequent at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. His settling there was not an enforced exile or a form of house arrest, and the caliph did not force him to recant his view, because it had some merit, but he did not oblige the Muslims to follow it.[3]

The soundest report about the story of Abu Dharr ؓ is that which was narrated by al-Bukhâri in his *Saheeh* from Zayd ibn Wahb who said: I passed by al-Ribdhah and there I saw Abu Dharr ؓ. I said to him: Why did you settle here? He said: I was in Syria, and Mu'âwiyah and I disagreed concerning the verse,

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلۡأَحۡبَارِ وَٱلرُّهۡبَانِ لَيَأۡكُلُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَكۡنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلۡفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرۡهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾

"O you who believe! Verily, there are many of the (Jewish) rabbis and the (Christian) monks who devour the wealth of mankind in falsehood, and hinder (them) from the way of Allâh (i.e. Allâh's religion of Islamic Monotheism). And those who hoard up gold and silver (Al-Kanz: the money, the Zakâh of which has not been paid) and spend them not in the way of Allâh, announce unto them a painful torment" (*At-Tawbah* 9:34).

[1] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam,* 2/217

[2] al-Ribdhah was a station on the road between Iraq and Makkah.

[3] *Al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam,* 2/217

Mu'âwiyah said: this was revealed concerning the people of the Book; but I said: it was revealed concerning us and them. There was a debate between me and him concerning that, and he wrote to 'Uthmân complaining about me. 'Uthmân wrote to me telling me to come to Madînah, so I came, and the people gathered around me as if they had never seen me before. I mentioned that to 'Uthmân and he said to me: If you want to move (outside Madînah) but still be near us, that is fine. That is why I settled here, and even if they appointed an Abyssinian over me I would hear and obey.[1]

This report points to a number of important issues:

1- Zayd ibn Wahb asked him to verify what was rumoured by those who hated 'Uthmân: did 'Uthmân banish him or did Abu Dharr choose this place? The context shows that he left after the people crowded around him asking him about the reason why he had left Syria. The text of the hadeeth did not say that 'Uthmân told him to go to al-Ribdhah, rather he chose it himself. This is supported by what Ibn Hajar said, narrating that 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Sâmit said: I entered with Abu Dharr upon 'Uthmân and he uncovered his head and said: By Allâh, I am not one of them - meaning the rebels - and he said: We only sent for you so that you could be near us in Madînah. He said: I have no need of that; let me go to al-Ribdhah. And he said: Yes.[2]

2- He said: I was in Syria. The reason why he was living in Syria is that which was narrated by Abu Ya'la via Zayd ibn Wahb: Abu Dharr told me: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to me:

«إِذَا بَلَغَ الْبِنَاءُ - أَي الْمَدِينَة - سَلْعًا، فَارْتَحِلْ إِلَى الشَّامِ»

"When construction in Madînah reaches Sal', leave for Syria."

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Zakâh, Bâb ma ada zakâtuhu,* no. 1406

[2] *Fath al-Bâri,* 3/274

When construction reached Sal', I came to Syria and lived there.[1] According to another report, Umm Dharr said: By Allâh, 'Uthmân never told Abu Dharr to go to al-Ribdhah but the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«إِذَا بَلَغَ الْبِنَاءُ ـ أَي الْمَدِينَةَ ـ سَلْعًا فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا»

"When construction in Madînah reaches Sal', leave (the city)."[2]

3- The story of Abu Dharr with regard to wealth stems from his understanding of the verse:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلْأَحْبَارِ وَٱلرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْبَٰطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۝ يَوْمَ يُحْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَىٰ بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ ۖ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُواْ مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ﴾

"O you who believe! Verily, there are many of the (Jewish) rabbis and the (Christian) monks who devour the wealth of mankind in falsehood, and hinder (them) from the way of Allâh (i.e. Allâh's religion of Islamic Monotheism). And those who hoard up gold and silver (Al-Kanz: the money, the Zakâh of which has not been paid) and spend them not in the way of Allâh, announce unto them a painful torment. On the Day when that (Al-Kanz: money, gold and silver, the Zakâh of which has not been paid) will be heated in the fire of Hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, (and it will be said unto them:) 'This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard.'" (*At-Tawbah* 9:34-35)

---

[1] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/219

[2] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/72. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*

al-Bukhâri narrated a report which indicates that Abu Dharr focused on the punishment mentioned - "On the Day when that (*Al-Kanz*: money, gold and silver, the Zakâh of which has not been paid) will be heated..." - and he used to tell people about that to make them fear the punishment. It was narrated that al-Ahnaf ibn Qays said: I sat with some people of Quraysh and there came a man with dishevelled hair and clothing, who came and sat with them, then he said: Give bad news to the hoarders of heated stones that will be heated for them in the Fire of Hell, then they will be placed on the breast of one of them until they come out from his back, and they will be placed on his back until they come out from his front, and he will be trembling. Then he went away and sat by a pillar, and I followed him and sat with him, and I did not know who he was. I said to him: I think that the people did not like what you said. He said: They do not understand anything.

Abu Dharr quoted as evidence the words of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ:

«مَا أُحِبُّ أَنَّ لِي مِثْلَ أُحُدٍ ذَهَبًا، أُنْفِقُهُ كُلَّهُ إِلَّا ثَلاثَةَ دَنَانِيرَ»

"I would not like to have the equivalent of Mount Uhud in gold, but I would spend it (in charity) all except three dinars."[1]

4- The majority of the Sahâbah disagreed with Abu Dharr and interpreted the warning as applying to the withholding of zakâh. They quoted as evidence for that the hadeeth narrated by Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri who said: The Prophet ﷺ said:

«لَيْسَ فِيمَا دُونَ خَمْسِ أَوَاقٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَلَيْسَ فِيمَا دُونَ خَمْسِ ذَوْدٍ صَدَقَةٌ، وَلَيْسَ فِيمَا دُونَ خَمْسِ أَوْسُقٍ صَدَقَةٌ»

"There is no zakâh on less than five uqiyahs, there is no zakâh on

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Zakâh,* no. 1408

less than five camels, there is no zakâh on less than five wasqs."[1]

Al-Hâfiz Ibn Hajar said: What is understood from the hadeeth is that anything more than five is subject to zakâh, which implies that any kind of wealth in which zakâh is paid is not included in this warning, and whatever wealth is left after paying zakâh is not regarded as kanz.[2] Ibn Zayd said: Anything less than five is not subject to zakâh, and nothing is due on it, so it is definitely not kanz. Allâh praises those who give zakâh, and the one who is praised for giving that which is due from his wealth cannot be condemned for keeping what is left of his wealth.[3] Al-Hâfiz said: We can sum it up by saying: That which is not subject to zakâh cannot be called kanz, because it is forgiven. The same applies to the wealth on which zakâh has been paid, because it is permissible to keep what is left after paying zakâh and it is not regarded as kanz.[4]

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr said: The majority are of the view that the blameworthy kind of kanz is that on which zakâh has not been paid. This is indicated by the marfoo' hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah: "If you have paid the zakâh on your wealth, you have done your duty," and no one disagreed with that except a group of ascetics such as Abu Dharr.[5]

5- Perhaps Abu Dharr's attitude towards spending may be explained by the report narrated by Imam Ahmad from *Shadd*âd ibn Aws who said: Abu Dharr would hear ahâdeeth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in which there was some strictness, then he would go back to his people and convey what he had heard with some strictness, then the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would grant a concession later on, but Abu Dharr

---

[1] *al-Bukhâri, Kitâb al-Zakâh,* no. 1405

[2] *Fath al-Bâri,* 3/272

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/107

[4] ibid.

[5] *Fath al-Bâri,* 3/273

did not hear of it, so he continued to adhere to the strict instructions.[1]

6- The words "If you want to move (outside Madînah) but still be near us, that is fine" indicate that 'Uthmân asked Abu Dharr to move outside Madînah in a kind manner, but he did not order him to do so or tell him where to go. If Abu Dharr had refused to move, 'Uthmân would not have forced him to do so, but Abu Dharr was obedient to the caliph because he said at the end of the hadeeth: "even if they appointed an Abyssinian over me I would hear and obey."[2] Another indication that he hated *fitnah* and rebellion against the ruler to whom allegiance had been sworn is the report narrated by Ibn Sa'd, which says that some of the people of Kufah said to Abu Dharr when he was in al-Ribdhah: This man did such and such to you - why don't you fight him? He said: No; even if 'Uthmân asked me to march from the east to the west, I would obey him.[3]

7- The reason why Abu Dharr moved to a place outside Madînah, or 'Uthmân asked him to do that, was that *fitnah* (turmoil) had began to rear its head in various regions, and those who bore grudges had begun to spread false rumours, and they wanted to make use of Abu Dharr's condemnation of accumulation of wealth, as he insisted on his views. 'Uthmân did not want Abu Dharr to go far away, and he thought it better to give precedence to warding off something bad rather than seeking some benefit, because Abu Dharr's staying near Madînah served the important interest of conveying his knowledge to the seekers of knowledge, but 'Uthmân nevertheless thought it better to ward off the bad consequences that he thought would result from people following his strict views on this issue.

---

[1] *al-Musnad*, 5/125

[2] *al-Bukhâri*, 1406

[3] *at-Tabaqât*, 4/227

8- Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi said: Abu Dharr was an ascetic who thought that the people were acquiring too much of mounts and clothing when they started being able to afford them, so he denounced them; he wanted people to give all their wealth in charity and distribute it to the poor, but that is something that is not obligatory. There was some disagreement between Abu Dharr and Mu'âwiyah in Syria, so Abu Dharr left and went to Madînah, where people gathered around him, and he started to propagate his views. 'Uthmân said to him: It is better to keep away from people, meaning: you are following views that make you unfit to mix with people. Whoever was following a view like that of Abu Dharr was required to isolate himself and not mix with people, and everyone was allowed to keep and enjoy that which is not forbidden in sharee'ah. So he left as a pious ascetic, leaving behind a group of pious people, and both were good and blessed. Abu Dharr's way was better, but not everyone can attain that, because if they did that life could not continue. Glory be to the One Who has made people of different statuses and positions.[1]

Ibn al-'Arabi said: There was also some disagreement between Abu'l-Darda' and Mu'âwiyah, as Abu'l-Darda' was an ascetic and also a judge in Syria. When he became very strict in adhering to the path of truth, and he wanted to apply the way of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb to people who could not put up with that, they dismissed him, and he left and went to Madînah. All of that served interests that did not undermine the religious commitment of anyone and did not affect the status of anyone at all. Abu'l-Darda' and Abu Dharr were free from any faults, and 'Uthmân was the most free from any faults and was the most honest. Whatever reports say that Abu Dharr was banished and mention a reason for that are all false.[2]

---

[1] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim*, p. 77

[2] ibid.

9- None of the Sahâbah told Abu Dharr that he was wrong, because his view was praiseworthy for those who are able to follow it. 'Uthmân did not tell Abu Dharr to recant his views, rather he asked him to refrain from denouncing people for what they had accumulated of permissible wealth. The reports which say that 'Uthmân forbade Abu Dharr to issue fatwas altogether did not reach the level of saheeh.[1] The saheeh report narrated by al-Bukhâri states that Abu Dharr said: If you were to put the sword here - and he pointed to the back of his neck - and I thought that I could convey something that I heard from the Prophet ﷺ before you killed me, I would do so.[2] There is no report in al-Bukhâri that suggests that 'Uthmân forbade Abu Dharr to issue fatwas, because forbidding a *Sahâbi* to issue fatwas without stating a reason is no easy matter.[3]

10- If 'Uthmân had forbidden him to issue *fatawa* altogether, he would have chosen for him a place where people would not see him, or imprisoned him in Madînah, or barred him from entering Madînah. But he gave him permission to settle in a place through which many people passed, because al-Ribdhah was one of the halting places for Iraqi pilgrims. Abu Dharr used to come to Madînah frequently and pray in the Prophet's Mosque. 'Uthmân said to him: If you want to move (outside Madînah) but still be near us, that is fine, and al-Ribdhah was not far from Madînah. It was close to the pasture of al-Ribdhah where the zakâh camels grazed. Hence it is narrated that 'Uthmân allocated a herd of the zakâh camels to him, and he gave him two slaves and a stipend. Al-Ribdhah was the best stop on the road to Makkah.[4] After quoting the reports which say that Abu Dharr isolated himself on his own initiative, Imam at-Tabari said: As for the

---

[1] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/223

[2] al-Bukhâri, *Kitâb al-'Ilm, Bab al-'Ilm qabl al-Qawl wa'l-'Aml*, 1/29

[3] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/224

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/286

others, they narrated many things about the reason for that, and terrible things that I do not want to mention.[1]

The historical truth is that 'Uthmân ﷺ did not banish Abu Dharr ﷺ, rather Abu Dharr asked him for permission and he gave it. But the enemies of 'Uthmân spread the rumour that he banished him, hence when Ghâlib al-Qattân asked al-Hasan al-Basri: Did 'Uthmân banish Abu Dharr? Al-Hasan said: No, Allâh forbid.[2] All the reports which say that 'Uthmân banished him to al-Ribdhah have weak isnâds and are not free of serious faults, and their texts contain odd things that go against the saheeh and hasan reports, which show that Abu Dharr asked for permission to go to al-Ribdhah and 'Uthmân gave him permission.[3] In fact, 'Uthmân sent for him to come from Syria so that he would be close to him in Madînah. When he came from Syria, he said to him: We sent for you for a good reason, so that you would be close to us in Madînah.[4] He also said to him: Stay with me and you will find the she-camel (with milk) coming to you morning and evening.[5] Would the one who said that to him banish him?[6] There is no report that says he banished him except one report narrated by Ibn Sa'd, but its isnâd includes Buraydah ibn Sufyân al-Aslami, of whom al-Hâfiz Ibn Hajar said: He is not strong, and he has some Râfidi ideas. Can the report of a Râfidi that contradicts the saheeh and hasan reports be accepted?[7] The Râfidis took full advantage of this incident and spread the rumour that 'Uthmân ﷺ banished Abu Dharr to al-Ribdhah, and that is something for which the rebels criticized him or used as a justification for their rebellion against him.[8] The Râfidi Ibn al-

---

[1] op. cit., 5/288

[2] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* by Ibn Shibh, p. 1037. Its isnâd is *saheeh.*

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/110

[4] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* p. 1036, 1037. Its *isnâd* is *hasan*.

[5] *At-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 4/226, 227

[6] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/111

[7] ibid.

[8] ibid.

Mutahhar al-Hilli (d. 726 AH) criticized 'Uthmân ﷺ for that, and he added that 'Uthmân beat Abu Dharr severely.[1] This was effectively refuted by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah.[2] The early generations of the ummah knew this fact. When al-Hasan al-Basri was asked whether 'Uthmân had expelled Abu Dharr, he said: No, Allâh forbid.[3] If it was said to Ibn Sireen that 'Uthmân forced Abu Dharr to leave, he would get very angry and say: He went of his own accord, and 'Uthmân did not force him to leave.[4] It is also narrated in a report which has a saheeh isnâd that when Abu Dharr saw that the people were crowding around him, he was afraid of *fitnah*, and he mentioned that to 'Uthmân as if asking permission to leave. Then 'Uthmân responded by saying to him: If you want to move (outside Madînah) but still be near us, that is fine.[5]

Proving false the report that Ibn Saba' influenced Abu Dharr ﷺ

Sa'eed al-Afghâni wrote in his book *'Aa'ishah wa'l-Siyâsah* that Ibn Saba' played a major role in the fitnah, and he attributes to him all the conspiracies, turmoil and battles that happened among the Sahâbah. He thinks that these well-planned conspiracies were the work of experienced devils who steered them and nurtured them until they came to fruition in all regions. Hence he wrote this heading: Ibn Saba', the feared, hidden hero.[6] It seems that al-Afghâni exaggerated about Ibn Saba' when he described him as a man of brilliance and deep insight, farsighted and crafty, who had a great impact on the masses.[7] He insists that he was one of the heroes of a Talmudic secret society whose aim was to bring about the downfall of the Islamic

[1] *Minhâj as-Sunnah* by Ibn Taymiyah, 6/183

[2] op. cit., 6/271-355

[3] *Tareekh al-Madînah*, 1037; its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[4] ibid.

[5] ibid.

[6] *'Aa'ishah wa'l-Siyâsah*, Sa'eed al-Afghâni, p. 60

[7] ibid.

state.[1] He almost suggests that he was working in the interests of the Byzantine state from which the Muslims had recently seized two important regions, namely Egypt and Syria, apart from other areas in the Mediterranean, and he finds it strange that Ibn Saba' was active in many fields, including religion, politics and war.[2]

He thinks that Ibn Saba' was very lucky in meeting Abu Dharr, and he tailored his views to the inclinations of the latter, and he suggests that the one who helped him to do that had a good understanding of people's moods and inclinations and had the help of an organized spy network. But this claim - that Ibn Saba' had an influence on Abu Dharr - has no basis in truth for a number of reasons:

(a) When Mu'âwiyah sent word to 'Uthmân ﷺ complaining about Abu Dharr, he made no reference to the influence of Ibn Saba'; he only said: I cannot deal with Abu Dharr any more, he has done such and such.[3]

(b) Ibn Katheer mentioned the dispute that took place between Abu Dharr and Mu'âwiyah in Syria in more than one place in his book, but he does not mention Ibn Saba' in any of them.[4]

(c) In *Saheeh al-Bukhâri* there is a hadeeth which points to the basis of the dispute between Abu Dharr and Mu'âwiyah, and it makes no reference at all to Ibn Saba'.[5]

(d) In the most famous books of biography of the Sahâbah there is mention of Mu'âwiyah's dispute with Abu Dharr, but there is no mention of Ibn Saba' having any

---

[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

[3] *Tareek at-Tabari*, 5/285

[4] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/170-180

[5] Ibid.

influence on Abu Dharr.[1]

(e) The report to that effect is mentioned in al-Tabari thus ... As for those who justify Mu'âwiyah's action of sending Abu Dharr to Madînah, they mention the story of Ibn al-Sawda's coming to Syria and meeting Abu Dharr, etc.[2] But this report which was narrated by al-Tabari is flawed and false, as it contradicts the historical facts, for the following reasons:

- They say that Ibn Saba' became Muslim at the time of 'Uthmân, and that he was a Jew from Yemen, and he started his destructive activities in the Hijaz, but they do not say that he met anyone in the Hijaz.
- He first appeared in Basrah three years after 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir was appointed as its governor. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir came after Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari in 29 AH, thus he must have appeared in Basra in 32 AH, and Ibn 'Aamir expelled him from Basra on the day of 'Arafah.
- They said that he went to Kufah where he spread false ideas and gathered followers, and incited him (Abu Dharr) against Mu'âwiyah, but he must have spent some time in Syria in order to have known about its people and lay his plans to spread his cause among them. If we assume for argument's sake that it was known what he was up to in Syria at the end of 33 AH, then what would you say if you knew that according to the saheeh reports, Abu Dharr's debate with Mu'âwiyah took place in 30 AH and he went back to Madînah and died in al-Ribdhah in 31 or 32 AH? What this means is that Ibn Saba' appeared in Basra at the time when Abu Dharr was already dead, so how and where could he have met him?[3]

Abu Dharr ﷺ was not influenced at all by the views of the Jew

[1] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah*, Sulaymân al-'Awdah, p. 51

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/285

[3] *al-Madînah al-Munawwarah Fajr al-Islam*, 2/225

'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'; he remained in al-Ribdhah until he died and was not involved at all in any of the turmoil that took place.[1] Moreover, he narrated one of the ahâdeeth which forbid indulging in *fitnah*.[2]

The death of Abu Dharr ﷺ and 'Uthmân's adding his family to his own

During the campaign to al-Tabook it was said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: Abu Dharr has fallen behind and his camel is going slow. He said:

«دَعُوهُ فَإِنْ يَكُ فِيهِ خَيْرٌ فَسَيُلْحِقُهُ اللهُ بِكُمْ، وَإِنْ يَكُ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ أَرَاحَكُمُ اللهُ مِنْهُ»

"Let him be; if there is any good in him, Allâh will cause him to catch up with you, and if there is no good in him, Allâh will relieve you of him."

Abu Dharr urged his camel to speed up, and when it was too slow for him, he took his luggage and carried it on his back, then he set out on foot, following the footsteps of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made a stop, and the Muslims kept a look out. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«كُنْ أَبَا ذَرٍّ»

"Be Abu Dharr."[3]

When the people looked, they said: O Messenger of Allâh, by Allâh it is Abu Dharr. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«رَحِمَ اللهُ أَبَا ذَرٍّ، يَمْشِي وَحْدَهُ، وَيَمُوتُ وَحْدَهُ، وَيُبْعَثُ وَحْدَهُ»

---

[1] *Ahdâth al-Fitnah al-Oola bayna al-Sahâbah fi Daw' Qawâ'id al-Jarh wa'l-Ta'deel*, by Dr. 'Abd al-'Azeez Dukhân, p. 174

[2] op. cit., p. 174

[3] This sentence appears in imperative form but is meant as a du'â', hoping that Allâh would cause it to be Abu Dharr. Al-Hakim 3/50

"May Allâh have mercy on Abu Dharr; he is walking alone and he will die alone and be raised alone."[1]

Time passed and the caliphate of 'Uthmân came, and Abu Dharr settled in al-Ribdhah. When he was dying, he told his wife and his slave: When I die, wash me and shroud me, and put me at the side of the road, and when the first caravan passes by you, say: This is Abu Dharr. When he died, they did that for him, and a caravan appeared but they did not notice it until the mounts nearly stepped on his bier. But Ibn Mas'ood was among the people who had come from Kufah, and he said: What is this? It was said: The bier of Abu Dharr. Ibn Mas'ood started weeping and said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spoke the truth:

«رَحِمَ اللهُ أَبَا ذَرٍّ، يَمْشِي وَحْدَهُ، وَيَمُوتُ وَحْدَهُ، وَيُبْعَثُ وَحْدَهُ»

"May Allâh have mercy on Abu Dharr; he is walking alone and he will die alone and be raised alone."[2]

They washed him, shrouded him, offered the funeral prayer for him and buried him, then when they wanted to move on, his daughter said to them: Abu Dharr conveys salâms to you and adjures you not to leave until you have eaten. So they did that, then they took them with them and brought them to Makkah, where they gave news of (Abu Dharr's) death to 'Uthmân, and he added his daughter to his family.[3] In one report it says: When we had buried him, his daughter invited us to eat and we wanted to take her with us, and Ibn Mas'ood said: The *ameer al-mu'mineen* is close by, let us consult him. So we went to Makkah and told him the news, and he said: May Allâh have mercy on Abu Dharr and forgive him for staying in al-Ribdhah. On the way back, 'Uthmân went with them and travelled via al-Ribdhah, and he added (Abu Dharr's) family to his own, then he headed for Madînah and we headed for Iraq.[4]

---

[1] *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishâm, 4/178 Al-Hakim 3/50

[2] op. cit., 4/478, Al-Hakim 3/50

[3] *at-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân fi Maqtal al-Shaheed 'Uthmân,* p. 87, 88

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/314



Chapter 6

Reasons for the *fitnah* that led to the murder of 'Uthmân

The importance of studying the turmoil that led up to the murder of 'Uthmân, and its consequences, and the Prophet's wisdom in telling him what would happen

The most important events of the fitnah that led up to the murder of 'Uthmân, and their consequences, such as the Battle of the Camel, Siffeen, etc

It was narrated that many of the salaf and scholars enjoined refraining from indulging in detailed discussion of the things that happened among the Sahâbah, and referring their affairs to Allâh, the Most Just Judge, whilst thinking positively of them and believing that they were in the position of *mujtahids* who will be rewarded in sha Allâh; we should avoid criticizing them and impugning their honour, because that leads to undermining sharee'ah, as they were its bearers who conveyed it to us. For

example, it was narrated that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez was asked about the people of Siffeen and he said: That is blood that Allâh protected us from shedding and I do not want to contaminate my tongue with it.[1] One of them was asked about that and he responded by quoting the words of Allâh,

﴿تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُم مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

"That was a nation who has passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:134).

There is a reason for this prohibition, which is the fear that it may lead to criticism and impugning their honour, which in turn could lead to incurring the wrath and anger of Allâh. But if this reason no longer applies, then it seems that there is no problem with it, so long as discussing the details of what happened will not lead to criticizing them at all. In that case, there is nothing wrong with studying this matter in depth, examining its causes, motives, precise details, results and consequences for the society of the Sahâbah and for those who came after them. Some of the scholars, such as Ibn Katheer, al-Tabari and others, wrote about the events of that critical period of Islamic history, and discussed in detail many of the issues that have to do with the *fitnah*. Some of them even went so far as to suggest that one or both parties were wrong, based on many reports and texts in which saheeh material is mixed with other kinds.[2] There are reasons why ahl al-Sunnah and the seekers of knowledge should probe the depths with regard to the *fitnah* that arose at the beginning of Islam, and examine its details. These reasons include the following:

(1) Contemporary writers who deal with the turmoil that occurred among the *Sahâbah* fall into three groups:

---

[1] *Hilyat al-Awliya'*, 9/114; *'Awn al-Ma'bood*, 12/274

[2] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth Fitnat al-Harj*, by Dr. 'Abd al-'Azeez Dukhân, p. 79

(a) Books written by authors who the product of a western way of thinking that is hostile towards Islamic history or is ignorant of Islamic history and does not see any good in it, so they carried on criticizing the *Sahâbah* and *Tâbi'een* in such a way that served the goals of the enemies of Islam who studied the events of the turmoil in detail and interpreted it in a way that condemns all of the *Sahâbah* and shakes the foundations of Islam. They presented these events as a political conflict for position and power, in which the *Sahâbah* forgot about faith, piety and sincerity towards Allâh, and suggested that they turned into people who were seeking worldly gains and leadership without caring whether blood was shed, people were killed, wealth was stolen or sanctities were violated, so long as it led to the power and leadership that they wanted.

Among the worst of these fabricators is Taha Hussein (*al-Fitnah al-Kubra*)[1] which indeed caused the greatest confusion in the minds of the new generation of Muslims. Taha Hussein went on condemning the *Sahâbah*, casting aspersions on their intentions and directing accusations against them to serve the interests of the enemies of Islam and the Muslims.[2] Many were influenced by his approach. It seems that writers such as this relied on historical reports narrated by historians such as al-Tabari, Ibn 'Asâkir and others, in which bad is mixed with good and lies with truth. He took the reports without paying attention to the way in which they compiled the reports in their books, and this is a serious mistake.[3] The Râfidis tried hard in their books to distort Islamic history, as in the reports of al-Kalbi[4] ,

---

[1] See *al-Fitnah al-Kubra : 'Uthmân, and 'Ali wa Banuhu* ('Ali and his sons)

[2] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth Fitnat al-Harj*, p. 80

[3] ibid.

[4] Muhammad ibn al-Sâ'ib al-Kalbi. Ibn Hibbân said: He was a Saba'i (follower

Abu Makhnaf[1] and Nasr ibn Mazâhim al-Munqari[2] . This is also seen even in the history of al-Tabari, but al-Tabari mentions the reporters by name, so that people of knowledge will realize the status of these reports.[3] This also applies to the writing of al-Mas'oodi in *Murooj al-Dhahab* and of al-Ya'qoobi in his *Tareekh*. Professor Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb indicated in his commentary on *al-'Awâsim* that the writing of history only began after the end of the Umayyad state, and the Bâtinis and Shu'oobis who presented themselves as Shi'ah played a role in concealing the beauties of history and blackening its bright pages.[4]

This plot will become apparent to anyone who studies *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim* by Ibn al-'Arabi, along with its commentary written by the great scholar Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb. The Râfidi Shaykhs wrote thousands of pages slandering the best generation ever known to mankind, and they devoted their time and effort to distorting the history of the Muslims.[5] This huge amount of Râfidi material is to be found in the books of history written by the Râfidis or in the books that quoted some of their reports, and you can see it in their books of hadeeth such as *al-Kâfi* and *al-Bihâr*, and in the books

---

of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'), one of those who said that 'Ali did not die and that he will return to this world. He died in 146 AH. *Mizân al-I'tidâl*, 3/558; Ibn Abi Hâtim, *al-Jarh wa'l-Ta'deel*, 7/270, 271).

[1] Loot ibn Yahya ibn Sa'eed ibn Makhnaf al-Azdi, from Kufah. Ibn 'Adiyy said: He was a fanatical Shi'i and a fabricator of their reports. He died in 157 AH. He wrote many books, including: *al-Riddah*, *al-Jamal*, *Siffeen* and others.

[2] Nasr ibn Mazâhim ibn Sayyâr al-Munqari al-Kufi. Al-Dhahabi said: He is a fanatical Râfidi whose report should be ignored. He died in 212 AH. His books include *Waq'at Siffeen*, which is available in printed form, *al-Jamal* and *Maqtal al-Hussein*. *Mizân al-I'tidâl*, 4/253

[3] *Usool Madhhab al-Shi'ah al-Imamiyyah*, by Nâsir al-Ghifâri, 3/1457

[4] op. cit., 3/1458

[5] op. cit., 3/1459

written by their Shaykhs in the past, such as *Ihqâq al-Haqq,* and in hadeeth such as *Kitâb al-Ghadeer.* This hateful, distorted material is the reference point for everything written by the enemies of Muslims, such as the Orientalists and others. Then came that morally defeated generation which sees the west as its example and ideal, and those pro-western elements seized everything that was written by the Orientalists and took it as their source of knowledge, adopting those views and spreading that confusion throughout the Muslim lands, which had a serious effect on Muslim thinking and culture. The Râfidis were the basic source for all this evil. The views of the Orientalists and their connection with Shi'ism is a subject that deserves to be studied and examined. The kâfir enemy started to benefit from the doubts and lies of the Râfidis and their fabrications against Islam and the Muslims from the time of Ibn Hazm (d. 456 AH).[1]

(b) Books written by some of the contemporary scholars of this *ummah.* These are useful in general, but the way in which they discuss and interpret the attitude of some of the *Sahâbah* and Tâbi'een is in many - or some - cases unfair, such as what was written by Abu'l-A'la Mawdoodi (may Allâh have mercy on him) in *al-Khilâfah wa'l-Mulk,* and what was written by Shaykh Muhammad Abu Zahrah (may Allâh have mercy on him) in *Tareekh al-Umam al-Islamiyyah,* and by Imam Zayd ibn 'Ali. These two books are filled with much that undermines the position of the *Sahâbah* and criticizes the caliphs of Banu Umayyah (the Umayyads), condemning them and denying that they had any good qualities or did any righteous deeds.[2] It seems that scholars such

[1] ibid.

[2] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth Fitnat al-Harj,* p. 81

as these did not examine the historical reports, rather they adopted Râfidi Shi'i reports and based their analysis and conclusions on them. May Allâh forgive them and us.

(c) Books whose authors tried to follow the methods of *al-jarh wa'l-ta'deel* (impugnment and validation, i.e. criticism of hadeeth) in examining historical reports and subjecting them to the methods of the *Muhadditheen* with regard to the *isnâd* and the text, in order to distinguish the sound reports from the weak.

These books represent a good attempt to resist these fabrications and explain the events in a proper manner which does not contradict what is known of the virtue, faith and *jihad* of the *Sahâbah*.[1] These books include that written by Dr. Yusuf al-'Ishsh entitled *Tareekh al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah,* and Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb's commentary on *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim* by Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi, as well as *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah* fi Sadr al-Islam by Dr. Sulaymân ibn Hamad al-'Awdah, *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah* fi'l-*Fitnah* by Muhammad al-Amhazoon, *al-Khilâfah al-Rashidah* by Dr. Akram al-'Umari[2] *Hiqbah min al-Tareekh* by 'Uthmân al-Khamees, *al-Madînah al-Nabawiyyah Fajr al-Islam wa'l-Asr al-Râshidi* by Dr Muhammad Hasan Sharâb, the commentaries by Muhibb al-Deen on *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim* and *al-Muntaqa,* and other books, studies and essays that follow the same method.

From this discussion it is clear that there is a great need for books that refute these false claims. These misrepresentations of Islamic history and the status of

[1] op. cit., p. 81
[2] op. cit., p. 82

the *Sahâbah* cannot be refuted except by means of a detailed study of these events and critical examination of the reports using the standards of *al-jarh wa'l-ta'deel*, determining which are saheeh and which are weak.[1] It was narrated that Ibn Taymiyah said: But if there is an innovator who criticized them on the basis of falsehood, they should be defended and his false argument should be refuted on the basis of knowledge and fairness.[2] Imam al-Dhahabi (may Allâh have mercy on him) was of a different view; he called for the burning of all books that contained such lies and which undermined the position of the *Sahâbah*. He (ﷺ) said: As it is stated that one should refrain from discussing what happened among the *Sahâbah* and their fighting, may Allâh be pleased with them all. We still come across this in various books, but most of the reports are fabricated or weak, and some of them are lies. Whatever is in our hands and in the hands of our scholars should be hidden away, or rather destroyed so that our hearts will be pure and we will be united in love and praise of the *Sahâbah*.[3] We learn something very important from al-Dhahabi, which is his statement that most of what is to be found in those books is fabrications and lies that undermine the position of the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ), but his suggestion that those books be burned is no longer feasible, because these books are widely circulated and many publishing houses and many of those who have ulterior motives have printed them, so we have no option but to subject them to critical examination and explain the faults, lies and mistakes that are contained in them, so as to protect the Muslim community from deviating in its beliefs and ways.[4]

[1] op. cit., p. 83
[2] *Minhâj as-Sunnah*, 3/192
[3] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*, p. 84
[4] op. cit., p. 83

(ii) It is important to study the *fitnah* of 'Uthmân's murder and its consequences in order to know the real causes and whether they were internal or external, the extent to which each cause contributed to what happened.

The one who reads a little of what has been written about this *fitnah* will sense that there was a major conspiracy behind it, and that the Magians, Christians, Jews and hypocrites co-operated in executing the plan. It is the matter of the enemies conspiring against the Muslim ummah at every stage of its lengthy history.[1]

But this conspiracy could not have succeeded were it not for an internal element of weakness that contributed to its success. So should not studying the era of the *Sahâbah* become obligatory for the purpose of discovering the reasons for the weakness of the Muslim ummah, noting the weak points through which the enemy was able to enter and benefiting from this information in order to direct the ummah of this time and protect it from similar slip-ups in the future.

The major events that led up to the killing of 'Uthmân ﷺ and the consequences of that require deep and painstaking study so that we may derive lessons from that period of history that will guide us in the present day and help us in our serious efforts to restore the rightly-guided caliphate, following the path of the Prophet ﷺ; thus mankind may find happiness and be brought out of its misery and wretchedness that are caused by its being far astray from the laws of Allâh, may He be exalted.

[1] op. cit., p. 85

The wisdom of the Prophet ﷺ in telling 'Uthmân of what would happen

In many *ahâdeeth* the Prophet ﷺ foretold that this ummah would be affected by division and fighting, which is mentioned in brief and in detail in various reports which speak of the causes and consequences of turmoil, or some of the events that would come to pass, who would be behind it, and so on. Many of the explanations that the Prophet ﷺ gave were answers to questions posed by the *Sahâbah,* who were enjoying the great blessing that Allâh had bestowed upon them, which was the blessing of brotherhood and unity. They started asking whether this blessing would last or come to an end. Because the Prophet ﷺ had learned via the Revelation that it would not last as it was, he wanted to prepare them for this turmoil so that they would know how to respond on the day when Allâh decreed that it should come to pass. By examining the ahâdeeth which speak of the turmoil, we can sense the following wisdom[1] :

1- When the Prophet ﷺ spoke of this *fitnah* and turmoil, he wanted to prepare the ummah so that it would be ready to cope on the day when these events came to pass, and would deal with them effectively at that time.

2- These ahâdeeth contain hints about who would stir up this turmoil, and that sometimes they would be people who appeared to be believers and be very strict in their religious commitment, but their understanding would be deviant and their hearts would be twisted, and in general they would be lacking in understanding and knowledge.

3- This turmoil would expose the hypocrites and cleanse the hearts of the believers and increase them in faith; they would be motivated to enjoin that which is good

[1] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola,* p. 68

and forbid that which is evil. It would be a kind of test which purifies hearts and makes people strive, so that good would be enjoined and evil forbidden.[1]

4- The reports about this turmoil carry an implicit warning against falling into it or playing any part in it, because when the believers of this *ummah* - the *Sahâbah* and others - heard the Prophet ﷺ foretelling that some of them would be involved in murder, and some would be attached to this world, and some would abandon *jihad*, and so on, this stirred in their hearts the feeling of wanting to confront this *fitnah* and each one of them would hope to be saved from that. Thus their attitude would be one of constant fear of falling into this peril unawares and fear in this sense is one of the greatest means of attaining salvation.[2]

   Ibn Taymiyah (may Allâh have mercy on him) said, after narrating a number of *marfoo'* ahâdeeth which speak of this division in the *ummah*: This idea was narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in many reports, which indicates that division is inevitable in this ummah, so he warned his *ummah* so that whomever Allâh wished would be safe from that.[3]

5- Informing the *ummah* about this turmoil is the best way of ensuring that they would be safe from it, because no matter how much you warn a man about a danger that is threatening him, if you do not describe the danger to him or explain how he may fall into it, he may never figure out how it could happen and he may not be able to discern the nature of the problem that is facing him, so he may fall into that danger without realizing that this is

[1] op. cit., p. 136, 137

[2] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*, p. 69

[3] op. cit., p. 70; *Iqtida' al-Sirât*, 1/127

the danger that he was warned about.[1]

6- The foretelling of this turmoil is accompanied, in some ahâdeeth, with the mention of its causes or results, or what the Muslim's attitude towards it should be. This is beneficial to the Muslim and to the ummah as a whole, as it will help them to stay away from the causes of turmoil or enable them to judge specific events by their outcomes or to adopt a sound attitude in the first place.

7- These *ahâdeeth* also offer clear evidence of the truthfulness of the message and Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, which increased the faith of the *Sahâbah* who heard the hadeeth and then saw it being fulfilled later on. And it increases the faith of any believer in any time or place who lives through the reality of *fitnah* and division that was foretold by the Prophet ﷺ.[2]

Dr. 'Abd al-'Azeez Sagheer Dukhân has compiled and examined the *ahâdeeth* that speak of *fitnah*, and explained which are *saheeh* and which are *da'eef*, in his book *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*. Then he drew certain conclusions from the *saheeh ahâdeeth*, including the following:

1- *Fitnah* or turmoil is the decree of Allâh in all nations, and in this ummah until the Hour begins. It is turmoil like pieces of dark night, blind, deaf and dumb, and those who indulge in it are doomed in this world and in the Hereafter, but those who stay away from it will succeed. Hardly anyone could ever know where he stands with regard to it, except those on whom Allâh bestows knowledge and piety and guides to the truth in matters of dispute by His leave.[3]

---

[1] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*, p. 70

[2] ibid.

[3] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*, p. 345

2- These ahâdeeth indicate that the *fitnah* of fighting amongst Muslims is inevitable and there is no way that it can be regarded as something strange, starting with the events that happened between the *Sahâbah* and the Tâbi'een, and throughout the eras of Islamic history until the present day. But what we have to do is to understand the causes of this fighting in order to avoid them, and strive to extinguish the flames of *fitnah* whenever it flares up among the Muslims; the Muslim should not just stand there watching

3- By the mercy of Allâh to this ummah, He causes their sins to be expiated in this world. The fighting and turmoils that befall them are a means of expiation for their sins.

4- In some of these ahâdeeth there is a clear indication that most of these turmoils would originate in the east, and this is what indeed happened. The first *fitnah* started in Kufah and Basra, and the battle of the camel took place there.

5- At times of *fitnah*, some people may sell their religion for some trifling worldly gain, and the situation is controlled by whims and desires and confusion, and those who follow true Islam become strangers in their attitude and conduct. Then the one who adheres to his religious commitment is like one who is holding on to a live coal or a thorn, patiently seeking reward through his pain and hardship for the sake of his religion which he believes to be true.

6- By means of *fitnah* Allâh protects some people so that they will not indulge in the turmoil and their hands will not be stained with Muslim blood, and they strive to bring about reconciliation and promote the sound

Islamic principles of compassion and brotherhood. Their attitude indeed appears strange in the midst of madding crowds and overwhelming whims and desires.[1]

7- In cases of *fitnah,* the tongue plays a greater role than the sword, and indeed the tongue is one of the main causes of *fitnah* and turmoil. A poisonous word of evil that is uttered may start a fire in the heart, making people angry and stirring up emotions, thus causing overwhelming turmoil.[2]

8- At times of *fitnah,* knowledge decreases, either due to the death of the scholars or because they keep quiet and isolate themselves from society, or because people are no longer interested in them for some reason. Then ignorance prevails and the people take ignorant persons as their leaders, who issue fatwas without knowledge, going astray and leading others astray. Thus insignificant people become prominent and the foolish prevail.[3]

9- In these ahâdeeth it says that Allâh ﷻ has promised His Messenger ﷺ that He will not destroy this ummah by drought and famine, and He would not send an enemy against them who would prevail over them forever, no matter how strong and powerful this enemy. But the thing that Allâh did not promise His Prophet ﷺ was that this ummah would not be divided, and this would be the door through which external enemies could enter. If the ummah became divided and they killed one another, then they would become weak and the enemy would be able to dominate them, steal their resources and control their affairs, and they would never find relief from that

[1] op. cit., p. 346-348

[2] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola,* p. 348

[3] op. cit., p. 349, 350

unless they became strong again by means of unity and referring for judgement to that which Allâh has revealed.[1]

10- These ahâdeeth show that the emergence and continuation of *fitnah* is the cause of the appearance of groups that deviate from Islamic guidance, and of the prevalence of those who follow falsehood.

11- *Fitnah* changes people's attitudes, until they are no longer interested in doing righteous deeds and good works; it creates enmity, resentment and hatred among people and they become confused.

12- The ahâdeeth indicate that this *fitnah* would be preceded by a period of peace, stability, material prosperity and security, such that a traveller would be able to go from Iraq to Makkah, not fearing anything but stray animals on the road. This in fact happened during the caliphate of 'Uthmân ﷺ, which was a time of peace and stability during which there was an accumulation of wealth, then came the turmoil of killing and all of that disappeared, turning from security to fear.

13- During times of *fitnah*, the best and most wise of people are killed, and all that are left are the riffraff who do not appreciate any good deed or denounce any evil.

These are some of the meanings derived from the *ahâdeeth* about turmoil.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] ibid.

Reasons for the turmoil that led to the killing of 'Uthmân ﷺ

Imam al-Zuhri said: 'Uthmân ruled for twelve years as caliph, during the first six years of which the people did not criticize him for anything, and he was more beloved to Quraysh than 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ, because 'Umar had been very strict with them, but 'Uthmân was lenient and generous towards them. Then the turmoil began after that. The Muslim historians call the events that happened in the second half of 'Uthmân's reign (30-35 AH) the *fitnah* (turmoil), which ended in the martyrdom of 'Uthmân ﷺ.[1] During the caliphates of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and the first part of 'Uthmân's caliphate, the Muslims were united and there were no disputes among them. Then at the end of 'Uthmân's caliphate there were some events that resulted in some kind of division, and some evildoers killed 'Uthmân, then the Muslims became divided after the murder of 'Uthmân.[2]

Muslim society during the caliphates of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and the first part of 'Uthmân's caliphate had the following characteristics:

---

[1] *at-Tabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd. 1/39-47; *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 7/144-149; *al-Khulafa' al-Râshideen* by al-Khâlidi, p. 112

[2] *Majmoo' al-Fatâwa*, 13/20

1- In general terms, it was a Muslim society in the full sense of the word, with deep faith in Allâh and belief in the Last Day, following the teachings of Islam in apparent seriousness and with clear commitment, with the least amount of sin ever known in any society in history. In this society religion was life itself, not something marginal that people turned to from time to time; rather it was the life and soul of the people, not just rituals that they tried to do properly. Religion guided their attitudes, opinions, interests, values, social connections, family ties, relationships with neighbours, buying and selling, travelling for business, efforts to earn a living and honesty in business. It meant that those who were able sponsored those who did not have any means, people enjoined that which is good and forbade that which is evil, and watched over the deeds of their rulers and governors. Naturally, this does not mean that every individual in this society was as described, as that is something that cannot be achieved in this life or in any human society. Even in the society of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ - as it says in the Book of Allâh - there were hypocrites who pretended to be Muslim when deep down they were enemies of Islam; there were people whose faith was weak, and those who tried to discourage others, or were slow to do good, or who were treacherous. But all of these people carried no weight in that society and they had no ability to divert its course, because those who were directing its flow were the sincere believers who were striving for the sake of Allâh with their wealth and their selves and adhering to the teachings of this religion.[1]

2- It was the society that achieved the highest level of the concept of the ummah, for the ummah is not just a group

[1] *Kayfa naktub al-Târeekh al-Islami?* By Muhammad Qutb, p. 100

of people who share a common language, land and interests, which were the bonds that united people during the Jahiliyyah. If a nation is formed on such bases then it is a nation of *Jâhiliyyah*. But the ummah as Allâh wants it to be is a nation that is united by the bond of faith, regardless of language, race, colour or worldly interests. This has never been achieved in history as it was achieved in the Muslim ummah. The Muslim ummah is a nation that is not based on bonds of land, race, colour or worldly interests, rather it is bound by ties of faith which united Arabs, Abyssinians, Byzantines and Persians, and united the peoples of the conquered lands with the conquerors on a basis of complete brotherhood in faith. If the concept of ummah was achieved by this ummah for the longest period in history, then the early period of Islam was the best ever, when Islam was manifested in the most complete way, including the concept of ummah which was achieved in an unprecedented fashion.[1]

3- It was a moral society that was based on strong moral foundations that were derived from the commandments and teachings of Islam. This moral base was not limited to guiding relationships between the sexes, even though this is one of the most prominent features of this society, which was free from wanton display and the chaos of free mixing and free from any deeds, words or gestures that might go against modesty, and free from immorality except a little from which no society is ever entirely free; but its moral foundation went much further than governing relationships between the sexes. It included politics, economics, society, thought and expression. The political system was based on the morals of Islam; the relationships between people in society were based on

[1] op. cit., p. 101

honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, cooperation and love, with no treachery, malicious gossip or impugning of people's honour.[1]

4- It was a serious society, one that was preoccupied with serious issues, not trivial matters. Seriousness does not necessarily mean frowning and harshness, rather it is the inspiration that creates energy in people and encourages vibrancy, work and action. The issues in which this society is interested are far and above these physical realities, so it has none of the characteristics of idle, hedonistic societies in which people hang about in their homes and on the streets, looking for ways to kill time because they have too much free time.[2]

5- It was a society that was striving in all areas where sacrifice might be involved, not only on the battlefield for the sake of Allâh -even though fighting for the sake of Allâh occupied a great space in the life of this society - but also all other areas. Everyone was prepared to work at any time he was requested to do so, so there was no need for any military or civil mobilization, because the society was already mobilized, motivated by faith and ready to act.[3]

6- It was a worshipping society, in which the spirit of worship was clear in all its activities, not only in performing obligatory and supererogatory acts of worship, seeking the pleasure of Allâh, but also in doing all kinds of deeds. For them, all deeds were worship, so they did work in the spirit of worship. The ruler ruled people in the spirit of worship; the teacher who taught people the Qur'ân and the teachings of Islam

[1] op. cit., p. 102

[2] *Kayfa naktub al-Târeekh al-Islami?*, p. 102

[3] op. cit., p. 103

taught in the spirit of worship; the merchant who remembered that Allâh was watching him as he bought and sold did that in the spirit of worship; the husband took care of his household in the spirit of worship and the wife took care of her household in the spirit of worship, following the guidance of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ:

«كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ»

"Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock."[1]

These are the most important characteristics of the era of Abu Bakr and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, but these characteristics were stronger the closer they were to the time of the Prophet ﷺ, and they grew weaker the further away we get from that time. These characteristics made it a Muslim society of the highest order, and they are what made that time an exemplary era in the history of Islam. They are also the factor that helped this religion to spread so astonishingly quickly. The conquests themselves were among the fastest in history; within fifty years they reached from the Atlantic in the west to India in the east. This is a phenomenon which in itself deserves to be recorded and highlighted. Similarly, the people in the conquered lands embraced Islam with no force or pressure, and the characteristics of the Muslim society are the real cause of this phenomenon. The people came to love Islam when they saw it being applied in this wonderful manner and they wanted to be among its followers.[2]

Studying this period of history should leave an impression that cannot be erased from the mind of the researcher, an impression that Islam is a realistic religion that is applicable with

[1] *At-Tirmidhi* (1705)

[2] *Kayfa nktub al-Târeekh al-Islami?*, p. 103

all its ideals in the real world, because these ideals are not something suspended in space for mere pondering and wishing, rather they are realistic ideals that can be implemented if people try as seriously as they should and give it enough effort. Moreover there is another impression, that what happened before could happen again, because people are people, and people are always able to rise once more when they are determined, and they can attain that victory and power again. Allâh says:

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ كَمَا ٱسْتَخْلَفَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى ٱرْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِى لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِى شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ﴾

"Allâh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely, give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fâsiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh)" (*An-Noor* 24:55)

One of the things that will help the Muslims to restore the Rightly-Guided Caliphate is knowledge of the factors and causes that led to its decline and disappearance, so that we can strive to avoid them and follow the means that Allâh has ordained as means to honour this ummah. Hence we need to discuss in detail the causes of the *fitnah* that ended with 'Uthmân's murder, because they are important. There follow the most important of these causes:

Prosperity and its effect on society

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw what his companions were going through of hardship and poverty, so he told them to be patient, then he told them that this situation would not last for long before the treasures of this world would be opened up for them, but he warned them against letting that distract them from doing righteous deeds and striving in *jihad* for the sake of Allâh, and what that might lead them into of fighting for worldly gains and their transient pleasures.[1] 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb understood this warning and it was part of his policy to protect the Muslims against the temptations of wealth and worldly pleasures. He strove hard to prevent the Muslims from spreading in the non-Arab lands. Were it not that the emergence of another, stronger interest dictated spreading further, his ban would have continued. But this relenting on 'Umar's part did not extend to the senior *Sahâbah*, both *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr*, who were in Madînah; his ban still applied to them.[2] Undoubtedly 'Umar's attitude is indicative of his fears about Muslims spreading to lands that were filled with all kinds of goodness and provisions, lest they become too interested in worldly gains and that cause them loss in the Hereafter.[3] When the reign of Uthmân came and the conquests spread east and west, and wealth started pouring in to the *bayt al-mâl* from the booty that was acquired, and the people's hands were filled with all kinds of good provisions[4] , it is obvious that these blessings and this income from the conquests would have a great impact on society, because of the coming of prosperity and the resulting preoccupation with wealth. Moreover it would also become a cause of competition and hatred, especially among those whose faith was not strong enough to purify their hearts and who were not disciplined by

[1] *Ahdâth wa Ahadeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*, p. 559

[2] op. cit., p. 565

[3] op. cit., p. 565

[4] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola*, p. 566

piety, such as the desert Arabs and other riffraff, those who converted as the result of conquest and the members of prosperous nations who entered Islam at a superficial level, who had been living a life of luxury and competing in those things. 'Uthmân understood this phenomenon and warned how this ummah would change in his letter to the people: The affairs of this ummah will drift into innovation after three things happen to you: when prosperity becomes widespread, when your children from female prisoners of war reach puberty, and when the Bedouin and non-Arabs start to read Qur'ân.[1]

As for widespread prosperity, al-Hasan al-Basri - who was an eyewitness - spoke of the state of society, the abundance of goods and the accumulation of wealth, and how the people changed and became extravagant and ungrateful. He said: I understand why people got upset with 'Uthmân. When a time comes when there is hardly a day when provision is being shared out among the people, it will be said to them: O Muslims, come and take your stipends, and they would take a lot. Then it would be said to them: Come and take ghee and honey. The stipends were regular, the provisions were plentiful, the enemy was defeated, relationships were good and there was plenty. What is more, the sword was never unsheathed against the people of Islam, then they unsheathed it against themselves, and by Allâh it has remained unsheathed until today, and by Allâh it will continue like that until the Day of Resurrection.[2]

As for the Muslims' children from the female prisoners of war reaching puberty, this manifested itself in their lifestyle of ease and luxury. The first evil that appeared in Madînah when prosperity became widespread was when the people started to keep pigeons and fly them. 'Uthmân appointed a man from Banu Layth in the eighth year of his caliphate to clip their wings.[3] People began to feel "high" from drinking *nabeedh*, so 'Uthmân

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/245

[2] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/224

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/415

sent a man to go around among the people with a stick to prevent that. When it got worse, 'Uthmân complained to his advisors, and they agreed to flog people for drinking *nabeedh*. He caught some of them and they were flogged. Then if 'Uthmân caught anyone doing evil or unsheathing his weapon, he would banish him from Madînah, and their fathers started complaining about that.[1] 'Uthmân stood up in Madînah and said: I am hearing news about wrongdoing that the people are committing, and I am not going to be the first one to open the door to *fitnah* or initiate it. I am reining myself in and restraining myself. Whoever follows me, I will lead him in the path that he knows, and whoever does not follow me, for every soul there is a Day of Resurrection and an angel to drive and an angel to bear witness (cf. Qâf 50:21). Whoever seeks the pleasure of Allâh, let him be of good cheer, but whoever seeks worldly gain will be a loser.[2] Thus when 'Uthmân, the pious man and Rightly-Guided Caliph, carried out his duties, and introduced disciplinary actions against the sons of the rich who had started to lead a life of luxury and corruption, those deviants joined with others who resented him.

With regard to the Bedouin and non-Arabs studying the Qur'ân, this emerged clearly with the formation of a class in the Muslim society which learned Qur'ân not for the sake of reward in the Hereafter, but for the payments offered by the caliph as encouragement and to soften people's hearts.[3] It is worth noting that the effects of this change began to appear first at the edges of the Islamic state, then they moved towards the capital of the caliphate, which led 'Uthmân to remind the Muslims in his khutbahs to be careful not to indulge in worldly matters. In one of his khutbahs he said:

Allâh has given you these worldly conveniences so that you may seek reward in the Hereafter; He has not given them to you so that you may be content with them. This world will fade, but

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 4/416

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*. 1/361

[3] *al-Wathâ'iq al-Siyâsiyyah fi'l-'Ahd al-Nabawi wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 392

the Hereafter will abide forever, so you should not be tempted by these temporary conveniences or let them distract you from that which is eternal. Fear Allâh, adhere to the main body (of Muslims) and do not divide into groups and factions.[1] Then he recited:

﴿وَٱعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ○ وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh (i.e. this Qur'ân), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allâh's Favour on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic Faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allâh makes His Ayât (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.,) clear to you, that you may be guided. Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma'roof (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful" (*Al 'Imrân* 3:103, 104)

In circumstances such as these, when prosperity was widespread and the Muslims were living a life of ease and plenty, and the people had free time after conquering the regions and they felt safe and secure, they started to criticize and feel resentment against their caliph.[2]

Hence we can see the effect of prosperity in creating *fitnah,*

---

[1] *Ahdâth wa Ahâdeeth al-Fitnah al-Oola,* p. 567

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/362

and we can understand the advice that 'Uthmân ﷺ gave to 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Rabee'ah - who had spent a short time with the Prophet ﷺ - when he was besieging al-Bâb[1] : Many of the people have become heavy (from eating too much), so take it easy with them and do not expose the Muslims to risk, for I am worried lest they be tested.[2]

At the end of a khutbah in which 'Uthmân exhorted the Muslims after they had accumulated a great deal of wealth and property, he said:

Do not let this transient life tempt you and do not let it distract you from that which is eternal. Beware of what may happen to you, adhere to the main body (of Muslims) and do not be divided not groups and factions.[3]

The nature of social change at the time of 'Uthmân ﷺ

Profound social effects had taken place, which started to work quietly but forcefully in a way that not many people noticed, until they emerged in a violent and explosive manner that started in the second half of 'Uthmân's caliphate and reached its peak in the rebellion that led to the martyrdom of 'Uthmân ﷺ.[4]

When the Islamic state expanded by means of conquest, there came about a change in the structure of society and some defects appeared in the social structure, because when this state expanded in area and number of inhabitants, it inherited a vast area filled with different races, colours, languages, cultures, customs, systems, ideas, beliefs, literature, architecture and other aspects of life. On the surface of this society there appeared some

[1] What is meant by al-Bâb is a region in Azerbaijan which is called al-Durr al-Bund. *Mu'jam al-Buldân,* 1/303

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/361

[3] op. cit., 1/362

[4] *al-Dawlah al-Umawyyah al-Muftara 'alayha,* p. 166

troubling features of instability and areas that were not in harmony with one another. Thus society became disharmonious, especially in the large provinces. Because of their strategic location and importance, they were used as bases to send conquering armies and received them on their way back, thus their numbers decreased because of death and killing. Thus to replace those who had died, they received even greater numbers of people from the conquered lands, Persians, Turks, Byzantines, Kurds and Berbers, most of whom were Persians, Arab Christians, other Christians or Jews.[1] Most of the inhabitants of these large provinces were those who had taken part in the Islamic conquests then settled in those regions, and most of them came from Arab tribes from the south, north and east of Arabia. They were not, in most cases, from among the *Sahâbah,* or more precisely, they were not among those who had been taught and disciplined by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ or by the first generation of the *Sahâbah,* either because the *Sahâbah* were preoccupied with conquests or because the number of *Sahâbah* was too few. Thus there were many changes in the structure of this human society which consisted of the early generation of Muslims and the inhabitants of the conquered lands, the Bedouin, those who had previously apostatized and Jews and Christians. There were also changes in the cultural structure of society, its standard of living, the emergence of new types of deviation and its readiness to accept rumours.[2]

Changes in the demographics of society

The social fabric was composed of a number of groups

(a) Those who remained of the early generation of the *Sahâbah* and those who had learned to some extent from the *Sahâbah.*

But these two types continued to decrease either as a result of

[1] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râdhisah,* p. 379

[2] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râdhisah,* p. 380

death or being killed in battle, or due to their dispersing throughout the regions. This reduced the impact of their presence as they scattered throughout the conquered lands, large provinces, newly-built cities such as Basra and Kufah, Syria and Egypt. Some of them left Arabia then came back to it.[1]

(b) The original inhabitants of the conquered regions.

They formed the majority in comparison to the newcomers who arrived during the conquests. The newcomers remained a minority even though they played a main role in running affairs and affecting behaviour, morals, ideas and language. But despite that, they are still regarded as a minority. This section - the original inhabitants of the conquered regions - mostly stayed where they were, but some of them moved to other regions in the Islamic state, some of them settling in the major provinces and some in the capital of the state, who were either female prisoners who became slaves, meaning that they settled wherever they followed their masters, or they moved for the purpose of trade, to seek knowledge or to work in the state administration, as there was no law that prevented them from doing that; rather they may have been encouraged and supported to do so.[2] The non-Arabs who came from the conquered lands were among the quickest of people to engage in *fitnah*, because most of them came from nations and people that bore a great resentment at having been defeated, so they were quick to engage in *fitnah* for many reasons, including the following:

√ Their ignorance and the fact that they had only recently become Muslim, and recently lost the power that they used to have.

√ Their lack of understanding of Islam, due to the language barrier and other factors.

---

[1] ibid.

[2] ibid.

√ Nationalism and hatred of the Arabs.

√ Some groups among them entered Islam outwardly for fear of the sword or *jizyah,* but they harboured feelings of ill-will towards Islam and the Muslims, and they hastened to engage in all kinds of *fitnah.*

√ People of whims and desires were relying on these groups to stir up trouble, and incited them accordingly.[1]

(c) The Bedouin who were known as desert-dwellers

Like other people, some of them were pious Muslims and some were kâfirs and hypocrites, but they were as Allâh says:

﴿ٱلْأَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَنِفَاقًا وَأَجْدَرُ أَلَّا يَعْلَمُوا۟ حُدُودَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

"The Bedouins are the worst in disbelief and hypocrisy, and more likely to be in ignorance of the limits (Allâh's Commandments and His Legal Laws) which Allâh has revealed to His Messenger. And Allâh is All-Knower, All-Wise" (*At-Tawbah* 9:97).

That is because they were hard-hearted, harsh-natured and coarse in speech, and due to these characteristics they were more inclined to have no knowledge of the limits that Allâh had revealed, namely laws, rulings and *jihad.*[2] So they were among the quickest of people to engage in *fitnah,* and there are several reasons for that, including the following:

√ Lack of understanding of Islam.

√ One of them would be quick to develop self-admiration

---

[1] *Dirâsât fi'l-Ahwa' wa'l-Firaq wa'l-Bida',* by Nâsir al-'Aql, p. 161

[2] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 380, quoting from al-Shawkâni, *Fath al-Qadeer,* 2/395-397

as soon as he learned anything of the Qur'ân, believing that he had become a scholar when he acquired a little knowledge.

- √ Their disrespect towards the scholars and reluctance to learn from them or follow their example.
- √ Their deeply rooted tribalism.
- √ The people of whims and desires took advantage of them and their naiveté and ignorance
- √ Their hot-tempered nature, aversion to cities and mixing with their inhabitants, and their suspicion of people whom they do not know. This is the nature of the Bedouin in all times and places.
- √ Their strictness in religious observance and their stubbornness with no knowledge. Hence most of the rebels came from this group.[1]

From these Bedouin emerged men who were known as *al-qurrâ'* (lit. the readers or reciters), but in this case what was meant by *qurra'* was different from the usual meaning. What is usually meant is a group of people who specialized in reciting the Qur'ân, but the word came to mean something else. Some of them followed the path of the rebels, who understood the Qur'ân in their own way; some of them were ascetics who did not understand the meaning of what they read and could not adjust to the reality of society.[2] These ignorant readers hastened to become involved in *fitnah* for several reasons, including the following:

- √ Strictness in religious practice in addition to their lack of proper understanding of Islam, which made them feel enthusiasm and protective jealousy with regard to

[1] *Dirâsât fi'l-Ahwa' wa'l-Firaq wa'l-Bida'*, p. 161

[2] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 381

religion, but without knowledge or insight. Hence they got carried away with their whims and desires in the name of protective jealousy towards their religion, with no attention paid to the consequences and no understanding of basic principles of sharee'ah, such as warding off evil or serving the interests of the *ummah*.

√ Self-admiration which one of them would develop as soon as he learned a few verses or ahâdeeth, without understanding them properly, so he would imagine that he had become one of the scholars who are able to determine what is in the best interests of the Muslims.

√ Looking down on the scholars and imams, and thinking that they had reached a point where they had no need of them or their understanding and knowledge, thinking "they are just men and we are just men."

√ Taking ignorant people as their leaders instead of the scholars and imams, because the people of whims and desires and the leaders of innovation and *fitnah* - most of whom were crafty individuals - always sought out these *qurra'* and tempted them, leading them step by step and exploiting their love of religion and provoking their protective jealousy, without proper insight.

√ Their ignorance of the rules on how to use the evidence and understand the texts with regard to rulings on *fitnah*.[1]

(d) Those who had previously apostatized

They had not been Muslim for long, and their joining Islam was out of necessity. We do not deny that some of them became

[1] *Dirâsât fi'l-Ahwa' wa'l-Firaq wa'l-Bida'*, p. 163

righteous and good, and were among the virtuous, but some of them had not tasted the sweetness of Islam and even though they claimed to be Muslim, they retained their previous mentality and continued as they had been before Islam, motivated by tribalism as if Islam had never penetrated deeply into their hearts or as if they believed that there was no contradiction between Islam as they knew it and tribalism.[1]

These groups of former apostates formed an element that contributed to setting the stage for *fitnah*. The apostates were there at the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (ﷺ); the only difference was that 'Uthmân's policy towards them was different from the policy of the two caliphs who came before him. Abu Bakr ﷺ had written to his commanders telling them never to seek the help of a former apostate in *jihad* against the enemy, and he emphasized to Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and 'Iyâd ibn Ghanam that they were not to bring on any military campaign anyone who had apostatized, until further notice. So during his era, no former apostate played any role.[2] Al-Shu'bi said: In his wars, Abu Bakr never sought the help of any of those who had apostatized, until he died.[3] Hence some of those who had apostatized but then became good Muslims felt too shy to meet Abu Bakr. For example, Tulayhah ibn Khuwaylid went to Makkah for 'Umrah, but he was never able to meet Abu Bakr, until he died.[4] During the caliphate of 'Umar ﷺ, he started to ease off on this policy towards the former apostates, and he urged them to go and join the fighting in Syria and Iraq.[5] In the army of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâs that went to al-Qâdisiyyah there were Qays ibn Makshooh al-Murâdi and 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib, who used to urge the people to fight. This all came about after 'Umar gave the former apostates permission to

[1] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 381

[2] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah*, by Sulaymân al-'Awdah, p. 155

[3] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah*, 6/347

[4] *at-Tareekh al-Islami*, 9/59

[5] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah*, p. 156

go and fight.[1] But this easing off on Abu Bakr's policy at the time of 'Umar was accompanied by a kind of caution; there were always conditions and guidelines before they were allowed to join, and a former apostate could never be appointed over a company of one hundred men. Hence Sa'd had to send Qays ibn al-Makshooh with seventy men only to pursue the non-Arabs who attacked them on the night of al-hareer.[2] Then 'Uthmân came and waived all these restrictions that had been imposed by the two previous caliphs on the former apostates. He thought that enough time had elapsed since the time of apostasy for anyone to have gotten rid of any of its influence, and he even decided to appoint some of the former apostates to do work for the state as a means of strengthening their faith, but that had no such effect on them, rather it made them even more corrupt.

The result of 'Uthmân's allowing former apostates to go to Kufah and join the army there was that the people of Kufah changed, and the army commander in Kufah, 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn Rabee'ah, was injured in the campaign against the Turks - he was the one who had fought them at the time of 'Umar, when they were scared of him and used to say: This man would never have dared to come and fight us unless he had angels with him, protecting him from death.[3] These effects can clearly be seen in the *fitnah* that resulted in the murder of 'Uthmân. When we look at the names of those who were accused of 'Uthmân's murder, we see men who belonged to tribes that were among the former apostates, such as Sawdân ibn Hamrân al-Sakooni, Qutayrah ibn Fulân al-Sakooni and Hakeem ibn Jablah al-'Abdi.[4]

(e) The Jews and Christians

Some of them - in fact many - had left or been expelled from the Arabian Peninsula and had settled in the large provinces, such

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 4/382

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/146

[4] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah,* p. 157

as Kufah and Basra. The Jews in particular - as is their nature - stayed in those regions that adjoined the areas under conquest, engaging in their well-known dual mission of financial control by various means and conspiring to bite the hand that was feeding them.[1] We will discuss the role of the Jews below, in sha Allâh.

The cultural fabric of society

In addition to this human mix, there was another mix of no less significance, if not of greater significance, namely the cultural mix. Cultures, ideas, systems and beliefs flowed with these huge numbers of people that joined the Muslim society, forming a heavy burden on its shoulders. What made matters worse was the fact that despite the Muslims' integration into the conquered lands, as they lived in their midst and intermarried with them, learning their languages, adopting their dress and following their traditions, their influence on the conquered peoples was limited at that early stage.[2] And the people of the conquered lands did not get a big share of Islamic education and did not become infused with the Islamic spirit as had been the case with the *Sahâbah*, the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr*; the same was also true of the Arab tribes who mixed with the people of the conquered lands. Islam had managed to fuse many tribes in a single melting-pot for a while. But it should be taken into account that the process of teaching and education that was led by a solid base of the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr* was not able to encompass these huge numbers of people, so the non-Arabs were unable to get rid of all the ideas and customs that they had followed during their *jahiliyyah*. This was due to a lack of balance between the horizontal expansion of the conquests and the vertical expansion in teaching people and enabling them to understand the Book of Allâh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, even though the *jihad* was invariably accompanied by *dâ'iyahs* and teachers who sought to teach the people their religion so as to keep pace (with the conquests) and

[1] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 381

[2] ibid.

avoid any weakness in the Muslim ranks and avoid any widening of the gap between the conquerors and the inhabitants of the conquered lands, which would result in many negative consequences and affect the political and ideological unity of the Muslim ranks.[1] It was not possible to avoid these negative consequences despite the enthusiastic efforts in the field of teaching Islam, the reason being that the spread of Islam was so swift and far-reaching. Iraq and the regions beyond it, as well as Syria, were conquered within a few short years, and it was not humanly possible for education efforts to reach and encompass the huge numbers of people in those regions.[2] Among the reasons for that was the fact that most of the *Sahâbah* who could have carried out this mission were killed in the battlefield, and there were only a few of them left, scattered in different regions. Those Muslims who wanted to learn gathered around them, which led to the emergence of the Tâbi'een, most of whom were sincere and were in the forefront of *jihad*, and some of them were killed too.[3] Similarly, there was not enough time to consolidate the teachings of Islam in the hearts of many people which, along with other factors, led to confusion and negative consequences. This was clearly manifested in the last years of 'Uthmân's reign.[4]

Emergence of a new generation

An even greater change took place in society, which was the emergence of a new generation of people who started to take up positions in society. They were different from the generation of the *Sahâbah*, living in a different era and with different characteristics. This is a generation[5] which in general is regarded as being of a lesser quality than the first generation that had borne on its shoulders the burden of building and

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/358
[2] ibid.
[3] *al-Yemen fi Sadr al-Islam* by Shujâ', p. 334
[4] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/359
[5] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah* by Yoosuf al-'Ishsh, p. 132

establishing the state. The first generation of Muslims was distinguished by its strength of faith and sound understanding of the essence of Islamic belief and its complete readiness to submit to the system of Islam as embodied in the Qur'ân and Sunnah. These characteristics were less apparent in the new generation that was the product of far-reaching conquests, in which individualism and selfishness appeared, along with the tribalism of different races and peoples, some of whom still bore the legacy of the *Jâhiliyyah* that they had once followed. They did not gain from an education in sound Islamic belief what the first generation of the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) had gained at the hands of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. That was because they were so great in number, and the conquerors were so preoccupied with war and new conquests.[1] So the *Sahâbah* were less involved in differences and divisions than those who came after them; the later a period was from the time of the Prophet ﷺ, the greater the differences and divisions.[2]

The new generation did not accept the way of the previous generation, and were accustomed to a different way. Thus a new mentality and a new outlook on life emerged, which was a concept that drifted away from the outlook that had prevailed at the time of the first two Rightly-Guided Caliphs. The new generation could not understand that mentality or accept it, or surrender to its rule.[3] Hence the deviants of the new generation joined those who were promoting *fitnah*.

Society's readiness to accept rumours

From this heterogeneous mix we can understand that society was susceptible to turmoil and receptive to rumours and hearsay.[4] This was expressed clearly by Ibn Taymiyah who said: Because the people at the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar,

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/356

[2] *Dhu'n-Noorayn, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân* by Muhammad Mâl-Allâh, p. 99

[3] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah,* by Yoosuf al-'Ishsh, p. 133

[4] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 382

whose example the Muslims were enjoined to follow as the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

«اقْتَدُوا بِاللَّذَيْنِ مِنْ بَعْدِي أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ»

"Follow the example of the two who come after me, Abu Bakr and 'Umar...", [1]

were closer in time to the Message and were stronger in faith and more righteous, their leaders were doing a better job and the society was more stable, and no *fitnah* occurred because society was dominated by people of strong faith. But at the end of 'Uthmân's rule and during 'Ali's caliphate, the third type (i.e., people with self-reproaching souls who mixed good deeds with bad) grew greater in numbers, and were influenced by whims and desires and by confusion as well as by faith and religious commitment. That happened to some of the governors and some of the people. Then this type (whose good deeds were mixed with bad) increased even more, and *fitnah* emerged because of that of which we have spoken above, namely the lack of piety and obedience on both sides, who were both under the influence of some whims and desires and sins. Both found explanations for their actions and believed that they were enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and following truth and justice, but along with that justification there was a kind of whims and desires and confusion, even though one was closer to the truth than the other.[2] This may be explained more precisely by the dialog that took place between the caliph 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib and one of his followers. The man said: Why did the Muslims differ concerning you when they did not differ concerning Abu Bakr and 'Umar? 'Ali said: Because Abu Bakr and 'Umar were rulers over people like me, and today I am a ruler over people like you.[3] The caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân understood what was

[1] *At-Tirmidhi* 3662

[2] *Majmoo' Fatâwa Ibn Taymiyah*, 28/148, 149

[3] *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldoon*, p. 189

going on in society, as he said in his letter to his commanders: The people are scattered far and wide, and selfishness is becoming widespread among them. I see three reasons for that: love of this world, whims and desires and too many grudges. Soon it will lead to turmoil.[1]

'Uthmân's coming after 'Umar (ﷺ)

The fact that 'Uthmân ﷺ came directly after 'Umar ﷺ and the differences in their natures led to changes in the way in which people were dealt with. Whereas 'Umar was a strong character who was strict both with himself and with those who were under his authority, 'Uthmân was softer in nature and kinder in his dealings with others, and he was not as strict with himself or others as 'Umar was. 'Uthmân himself said: May Allâh have mercy on 'Umar; who can do what 'Umar used to do?[2] Although the people were happy with 'Uthmân during the first part of his reign, because he was lenient with them where 'Umar had been strict, and love of 'Uthmân became widespread, later on they began to criticize him. This had to do with 'Uthmân's upbringing, as he was kind, easy-going, soft-natured, tactful and diplomatic, which influenced the way things developed and changed during his reign from how they had been during the reign of his predecessor 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb. 'Uthmân understood that when he said to some people whom he imprisoned: Do you know why you are daring to challenge me? Nothing made you dare to challenge me but my forbearance.[3] When the intentions of some of the rebels became apparent, after 'Uthmân had proven them to be wrong with evidence that refuted all the criticisms they presented to him in front of a group of *Sahâbah* and other people, the Muslims insisted on killing them but 'Uthmân insisted on letting them go because of his forbearance and gentleness, saying: We shall pardon and not

[1] *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân*, p. 64

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/418

[3] op. cit., 2/250

kill; we will try to explain to them and we will not punish anyone unless he commits an offence that requires a *hadd* punishment or makes a blatant show of *kufr*.[1]

Departure of the senior *Sahâbah* from Madînah

'Umar ﷺ had prevented the prominent people of Quraysh, the *Muhâjireen*, from leaving to other countries, except with permission for a short period. They complained about him and news of that reached him, so he stood up and said: I liken Islam to the ages of a camel; it starts out as a *jadha'* (one year old camel), then it becomes a *thaniyy* (two year old), then a *rabâ'iyy* (four year old), then a *sadâsiyy* (six year old), then a *bâzil* (nine year old). Is there anything left for the *bâzil* but the onset of its decline (as it has reached its peak)? Now Islam is like a *bâzil* (i.e., it has reached its peak). So long as Ibn al-Khattâb is alive, I will be standing at the mountain pass of al-Harrah, holding Quraysh by their chests to prevent them from throwing themselves into the Fire.[2] 'Umar was afraid for these *Sahâbah* if they scattered in the conquered lands and acquired property and wealth. If one of the *Muhâjireen* whom 'Umar was keeping in Madînah came to 'Umar and asked him for permission to leave, 'Umar would answer: In your having campaigned with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is that which will take you to Paradise; what is better for you today than going out on campaign is not seeing any worldly temptations.[3] But 'Uthmân allowed them to go out and was easy-going with them. al-Sha'bi said: When 'Uthmân became caliph, he let them go and they went all over, and the people gathered around them, so he was dearer to them than 'Umar.[4] As a result of that expansion, some of Quraysh gained wealth and property in the regions, and people gathered around them.[5] According to one report, when

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/364

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/413

[3] op. cit., 5/414

[4] op. cit., 5/414

[5] op. cit., 5/413

'Uthmân proved not to be strict with them as 'Umar had been, they spread all over. When they saw this world and the people saw them, those who had no virtue and nothing to offer Islam and were not known among the people at all gathered around them, and thus different groups formed. That was the first weakness that appeared in Islam, and the first *fitnah* that affected the masses.[1]

Jâhili tribalism

Ibn Khaldoon said: When the conquests were complete and the Muslims gained full control and power, and the Arabs settled in the regions on the border between them and other nations, in Basra, Kufah, Syria and Egypt, there were those who had been companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and were adhering to his guidance, the *Muhâjireen*, *Ansâr*, Quraysh and people of the Hijaz, as well as others who were like them. As for the rest of the Arabs, such as the tribes of Banu Bakr ibn Wâ'il, 'Abd al-Qays, Rabee'ah, al-Azd, Kindah, Qudâ'ah and others, only a few of them attained that level, but they played a major role in the conquests so they saw themselves as deserving of respect, but the people of wisdom showed greater respect to the earlier generation and recognized their rights, as they were still in a state of awe at the issue of Prophethood and the coming of the Revelation and the angels. But when the influence of that awe waned, and when the enemy was humiliated and the Muslims' power grew stronger, jâhili ideas began to re-emerge. When they realized that their leaders were from among the *Muhâjireen* and *Ansâr*, from Quraysh and other tribes, they began to resent that, and this happened to be at the time of 'Uthmân. They started to criticize the governors openly in the various regions, picking on everything they did and blaming them for that. They made unfair demands for governors to be dismissed and replaced, and they started to criticize 'Uthmân a great deal, and this criticism became widespread among their followers, along with rumours

[1] op. cit., 5/414

that spoke of injustice in various areas. News of that reached the *Sahâbah* in Madînah, so they grew suspicious and began to speak of dismissing 'Uthmân or telling him to dismiss his governors. He sent people to the regions to check on this news, and they came back to him and said: We did not find anything to be denounced and neither the prominent Muslims not the ordinary Muslims denounced the governors.[1]

The cessation of conquest

When the conquests came to an end at the end of 'Uthmân's reign, because of insurmountable natural or human barriers, especially in Persia, northern Syria and North Africa, and the booty stopped as a result, the Bedouin started wondering where the previous booty and the conquered lands that they regarded as their due had gone.[2] False rumours began to spread, accusing 'Uthmân ﷺ of having disposed of the lands that had been given as *waqfs* to the Muslims according to his own whims and desires, and having allocated them to whomever he wanted. These rumours upset and disturbed the Bedouin, specially since most of them had no work and were spending half of their time eating and sleeping, and the other half discussing the policies of the state and talking about 'Uthmân's conduct, which the followers of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' were exaggerating about. One of 'Uthmân's governors - 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir - understood what was going on and he advised the caliph, when he sought the advice of his workers, governors and advisors, that he should tell the people to engage in *jihad* and send them away from their wives on campaign for lengthy periods, so that the main concern of any one of them would be dealing with the lice on his head and taking care of his mount.[3]

In this atmosphere, where people who were used to going out on campaign but did not have much understanding of Islam were

[1] *Tareekh Ibn Kahldoon,* 2/477

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/344

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 2/340

talking about serious matters, bad consequences were possible and it was sufficient to stir up these Bedouin and manipulate them into revolting and causing troubles and turmoil. And this is what actually happened. Due to the cessation of conquest, the Bedouin played a role in the emergence of the first *fitnah,* and they were one of its main causes.[1]

Mistaken concept of piety

In Islam, piety is regarded as a good thing; it means giving up something that is permissible for fear of falling into something wrong. In principle it means giving up permissible things for the sake of Allâh. Piety *(wara')* is a personal matter which a person may expect of himself, but it is not right for him to expect it of others. One of the most dangerous types of piety *(wara')* is ignorant piety which regards a permissible thing as either forbidden or obligatory, and this is what happened to those who were involved in the *fitnah.*[2] The enemies of Islam at that time exploited their emotions and stirred them up, so they regarded 'Uthmân's actions which were permissible and served the interests of the ummah as drifting away Islam and from the path of those who had come before, and these ignorant people regarded those actions as very serious, to such a degree that they thought it permissible to shed the blood of the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ or to help those who regarded that as permissible. Thus the door of *fitnah* was opened to the Muslims and has remained open until today. This ignorant type of piety may be seen today in the actions of some Muslims who insist of shaping the rulings of Islam in accordance with their own likes and dislikes, or their customs and traditions.[3]

Ambitions of ambitious people

In the second generation of the children of the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ)

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* p. 353

[2] *al-Asâs fi'l-Sunnah,* 4/1676

[3] *Ahdâh wa Ahâdeeth Fitnah al-Harj,* p. 517

there were those who regarded themselves as qualified to rule and be in positions of leadership, but they found that the way to that was blocked. Usually when there are ambitious people who cannot find a way to fulfil their ambitions, they get involved in any movement that is aimed at changing the status quo. Dealing with such people is an extremely important matter.[1]

The conspiracy of the haters

Hate-filled hypocrites entered Islam, whose combined resentment, smartness and craftiness enabled them to understand the weak points through which they could create *fitnah*, and they found people who would listen to them eagerly, and that led to whatever it led to.[2] We have seen previously that there were Jews, Christians and Persians whose motives for hating Islam and the Islamic state are well known. But here we may add those who were subjected to *ta'zeer* punishments for offences that they had committed, and who had been punished by the caliph or his governors in some regions, especially Basra, Kufah, Egypt and Madînah. These Jewish, Christian and Persian haters, and criminals (who had been given *hadd* punishments) exploited groups of people, most of whom were Bedouin who did not understand this religion as it really is, and they all formed a group which was described by all those who met them as evil, and as troublemakers from the provinces and the dregs of the tribes[3] ; the wolves of the Arabs[4] ; the dregs of mankind who were united in evil[5] ; fools with no understanding[6] ; the worst thugs of the tribes[7] ; they were rabble and ruffians, the troublemakers of the tribes, the lowest of the low[8] ; they were

[1] *al-Asâs fi'l-Sunnah,* 4/1676

[2] ibid.

[3] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 392

[4] ibid.

[5] *at-Tabaqât,* 3/71. These are the words of Ibn Sa'd.

[6] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râ*shidah, p. 392

[7] *Shadharât al-Dhahab,* 1/40. These are the words of Ibn al-'Imâd.

[8] *Sharh Saheeh Muslim,* 15/148, 149

the tools of the shaytân.[1] The sources constantly mention the name of the Jew 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' al-San'âni among these hate-filled persons. They say that he was a Jew who became Muslim, but no one checked on his intentions, and he was able to move among the Muslim provinces because he was regarded as one of the Muslims.[2] We will discuss him in a separate section, in sha Allâh.

Plans to stir up trouble against 'Uthmân ﷺ

Society was primed to accept rumours and talk due to a number of internal factors, and the social fabric was susceptible to penetration. Those who wanted to stir up turmoil decided to criticize the rulers and governors on the grounds of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil until they got the people on their side and the criticism began to reach 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ himself, because he was the ruler of the state. If we list the criticisms that were levelled against the caliph and used against him, we will see that they fall into five categories.

1- Personal issues from the time before he was caliph (his absence from some battles and other events)

2- His financial policies - stipends and lands set aside for grazing

3- His executive administrative policies: appointment of his relatives and his way of selecting governors

4- Fiqhi matters based on his *ijtihâd* or the interests of the ummah (offering the prayer in full in Mina, compiling the Qur'ân, expanding the mosque)

5- His dealings with some of the *Sahâbah*: 'Ammâr, Abu Dharr, Ibn Mas'ood.[3]

I have explained 'Uthmân's stance regarding these

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/327

[2] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 33

[3] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah,* p. 394

accusations in the appropriate places, except for 'Ammâr, which I will discuss below in sha Allâh. There were some other accusations against 'Uthmân ؓ either during his reign, with which they confronted him and he refuted them then, or things that were fabricated against him later on by some narrators and writers, which were not valid and which did not reach a level that would justify killing him.[1]

The criticisms referred to above, which are mentioned in *Tareekh al-Tabari* and other books of history, and which was narrated via unknown narrators and weak storytellers, especially among the Râfidis, were and still are a major problem with regard to facts about the lives of the caliphs and imams, especially at times of tribulation and turmoil. Unfortunately the biography of 'Uthmân has the greatest share of that; his biography has been subjected to fabrications, distortions and exaggerations produced by these deviants so as to incite people against him and give him a bad image. 'Uthmân himself realized that when he wrote to his governors saying: The people have spread all over and become inclined towards evil, with three types of motives for that: love of this world, whims and desires, or hatred and grudges.[2] Ibn al-'Arabi said of that criticism: They said unfairly, based on the reports of liars, that 'Uthmân committed many evils and injustices during his caliphate. All of that is false, both is isnâd and text.[3]

Ibn Taymiyah stated that 'Uthmân ؓ was not infallible, and said: The basic principle is that we do not believe that anyone was infallible after the Prophet ﷺ, rather the caliph or anyone else may make mistakes and commit sins, but they may repent or their sins may be expiated by their many good deeds, or they may be faced with calamity by means of which Allâh will expiate their sins, or they may be expiated in other ways. Everything that has been narrated from 'Uthmân may at worst be a sin or a mistake, but 'Uthmân achieved the means of attaining forgiveness in many

[1] op. cit., p. 400

[2] *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayân*, p. 64

[3] *al-'Awâsim min al-Qawâsim*, p. 61-63

ways, such as his having come to Islam early, his faith and *jihad*, and other good deeds that he did. It is proven that the Prophet ﷺ testified in his favour and gave him the glad tidings of Paradise for a calamity that would befall him.[1] Moreover, he repented from most of the things for which they criticized him, and he met with a great calamity by means of which Allâh expiated his sins and he bore it with patience until he was killed wrongfully as a martyr, which is one of the greatest means of expiation.[2]

Using means to stir up the people

The most important of these means were: spreading rumours until they became widespread; stirring up debates and arguments against the caliph before the people; criticizing the governors; fabricating forged letters which were attributed to the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ), 'Aa'ishah, 'Ali, Talhah and az-Zubayr; spreading the rumour that 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib was more entitled to the caliphate and that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had left instructions that he should be the caliph after him; organizing groups in Basra, Kufah and Egypt, with four groups in each province, which is indicative of prior planning. They gave the people of Madînah the false impression that they had only come at the invitation of the *Sahâbah*, and things escalated until they reached the level of murder.[3] In addition to these means, they also used a number of slogans, including *takbeer* and the claim that their *jihad* was against injustice, or that they were only enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, or making demands to change and dismiss governors, but then the demand turned into a demand for the dismissal of 'Uthmân, until they got carried away in their audacity and hastened to kill the caliph, especially when they heard that the people of the provinces were coming to support the caliph; that made them more eager to corner the caliph and kill him by any means.[4]

---

[1] Muslim, *Kitâb Fadâ'il al-Sahâbah*, 4/1867, 1869

[2] *Dhu'n-Noorayn, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân*, by Muhammad Mâl-Allâh, p. 63

[3] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 401

[4] *Dirâsât fi 'Ahd al-Nubuwwah wa'l-Khilâfah al-Râshidah*, p. 402

Influence of the Saba'is (followers of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba') on the *fitnah*

The Saba'is were a real group, not a figment of the imagination

The early scholars were unanimously agreed that the Saba'is existed, with no exception. A few modern scholars, most of whom are Shi'is, disagreed with that, and their claim is based on the view that this was a product of the imagination of Sayf ibn 'Umar al-Tameemi, because some of the scholars of biography criticized this Sayf in the field of hadeeth narration, but the scholars regard him as acceptable in the field of historical reports. Moreover, there are many reports narrated by Ibn 'Asâkir which mention 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' of which Sayf ibn 'Umar is not one of the narrators. Al-Albâni ruled that some of these reports were saheeh even though they were narrated by the Shi'ah in their books of sects, biographies or hadeeth, and there is no mention of this Sayf ibn 'Umar at all in them. This is discussed in detail by Dr. Sulaymân al-'Awdah in his book *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Athruhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah* fi *Sadr al-Islam*.

Some researchers doubted the existence of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'[1] and said that he was an imaginary figure. But they denied his existence without offering any proof or evidence. Those who denied the existence of Ibn Saba' were groups of Orientalists and Arab researchers, most of whom were modern Shi'ah. It is strange that these Orientalists and their lackeys among the Râfidis and westernized Muslims of our time deny the existence of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' and claim that he is an imaginary figure. How ignorant and audacious it is to suggest

[1] 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', who is also known as Ibn al-Sawda', was a Jew from San'â' who appeared outwardly to have become Muslim at the time of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. He was noticeably active in Syria, Iraq and Egypt in particular. He drew up plans and produced destructive ideas to divert the Muslims from their religion and stop them obeying their caliph, and create division among them. *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* 1/284

such a thing when the books of history and sects are filled with his biography and the narrators transmitted reports of his deeds that were well known throughout the region. The historians, scholars of hadeeth and authors of books on sects and groups, biography, literature and genealogy who discussed the Saba'is were all unanimously agreed that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' who appears in the books of Sunni writers as well as in Shi'i books was a real historical character. Hence the reports of the *fitnah* and Ibn Saba's role in it are not limited to *Tareekh al-Tabari* and are not based only on the reports of Sayf ibn 'Umar al-Tameemi contained therein, rather there are widespread reports in the narrations of earlier scholars and throughout the books that record the events of Islamic history and discuss the views of different sects during that period. But the advantage that Imam al-Tabari had over others is that he had more abundant material and more details than others. Hence shedding doubts on these events without any evidence implies a rejection of all these reports and labelling those narrators and scholars as foolish, and distorting the historical facts. Since when does an academic methodology based on pure rational thinking form a basis for rejection as opposed to texts and corroborating reports? Is this methodology based on overlooking and ignoring all the sources, both earlier and later, which prove that Ibn Saba' was a real person?[1] Ibn Saba' is mentioned in many books of *ahl al-sunnah*, including the following:

- The Saba'is are mentioned by A'sha Hamadân[2] (d. 83 AH). He lampooned al-Mukhtâr ibn Abi 'Ubayd al-Thaqafi and his supporters from Kufah, after he fled with the nobles of the tribes of Kufah to Basra, by saying:

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah* (1/70); *Da'âwa al-Inqâdh li'l-Tareekh al-Islami* – Radd 'ala Hasan Farhât al-Mâliki, by Dr Sulaymân ibn Hamad al-'Awdah. In his refutation he mentions the isnâds which al-Albâni (may Allâh have mercy on him) examined and classified.

[2] His name was 'Abd al-Rahmân ibn 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Hârith al-Hamadâni, who was known as A'sha Hamadân. He was a Persian poet and one of the *fuqaha'* of the *qurra'*, but he composed poetry and was known for it. Al-Dhahabi said: a famous eloquent poet, who was a devoted worshipper and man of virtue. He was killed in 83 AH.

I bear witness that you are Saba'is, and I am aware of you, O guardians of kufr.[1]

There is a report from al-Sha'bi (d. 103 AH/721 CE) which says that the first one who told lies was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'.[2] Ibn Habeeb[3] (d. 245 AH/860 CE) mentioned Ibn Saba' and regarded him as one of the children of the Ethiopian women.[4] Abu 'Aasim Khushaysh ibn Asram (d. 253 AH) narrated a report about 'Ali ﵁ burning some of the companions of Ibn Saba', in his book *al-Istiqâmah*.[5] Al-Jâhiz[6] (d. 255 AH) is regarded as one of the first to refer to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'[7], but his report is not the first, as Dr. Jawâd 'Ali thinks.[8]

The story of 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib ﵁ burning a group of heretics is mentioned in saheeh reports that are narrated in the *Saheehs*, *Sunans* and *Musnads* (books of hadeeth).[9] There is nothing strange about using the word heretic with regard to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' and his group. Ibn Taymiyah said: The Râfidi ideas started with the heretic 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'.[10] Al-Dhahabi said: 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' was one of the extreme heretics; he was misguided and misled others.[11] Ibn Hajar said: 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' was one of the extreme heretics... he had followers who were called Saba'is, who believed in the divinity of 'Ali ibn Abi

---

[1] *Diwân A'sha Hamadân*, p. 148

[2] *Tareekh Dimashq*, by Ibn 'Asâkir, 9/331

[3] Muhammad ibn Habeeb ibn Umayyah al-Hâshimi, a scholar of genealogy, historical reports, language and poetry, d. 245 AH. *Tareekh Baghdad*, 2/277

[4] *al-Muhbar* by Ibn Habeeb, p. 308; *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'* by al-'Awdah, p. 53

[5] His name was Khushaysh ibn Asram ibn al-Aswad al-Nasâ'i, whose biography was written by al-Dhahabi. *Tadhkirat al-Huffâz*, 2/551; *Shadharât al-Dhahab*, 2/129

[6] His name was 'Amr ibn Bahr ibn Mahboob al-Kinâbi, one of the leading scholars of literature and knowledge, d. 255 AH. *Wafiyât al-A'yân*, 3/470

[7] *al-Bayân wa'l-Tabyeen*, 3/81

[8] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah* (1/290); *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'* by al-'Awdah, p. 53

[9] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah* (1/290); *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'* by al-'Awdah, p. 53

[10] *Majmoo' al-Fatâwa*, 28/483

[11] *Mizân al-I'tidâl* by al-Dhahabi, 2/462

Tâlib. 'Ali burned them with fire during his caliphate.[1] Ibn Saba' is also mentioned in the books of *al-jarh wa'l-ta'deel* (*hadeeth* criticism). Ibn Hibbân (d. 354 AH) said: al-Kalbi - Muhammad ibn al-Sâ'ib al-Ikhbâri - was a Saba'i, one of the followers of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', one of those who said that 'Ali did not die and that he will come back to this world before the Hour begins. If they saw a cloud, they would say: The *ameer al=mu'mineen* (i.e., 'Ali) is in it.[2] The books of genealogy also confirm that the Saba'i group is named after 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' such as, for example *al-Ansâb* by al-Sam'âni[3] (d. 562 AH).[4] Ibn 'Asâkir (d. 571 AH) described Ibn Saba' as follows: 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', after whom the Saba'is ware named, who are a group of extreme Râfidis. He was originally from Yemen, a Jew who apparently became a Muslim.[5] Sayf ibn 'Umar was not the only source for reports about 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'. In his *Tareekh*, Ibn 'Asâkir narrated reports which have no connection to Sayf, which confirm the existence of Ibn Saba'.[6] Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728 AH) stated that the origins of the Râfidi sect lay with the hypocrites and heretics, and that it was the invention of the heretic Ibn Saba', who exaggerated about 'Ali and claimed that he should have been caliph and that he was appointed by a clear text, and he claimed that he was infallible.[7] Al-Shâtibi[8] (d. 790 AH) pointed out that the innovation of the Saba'is was one that had to do with belief in the existence of another god besides Allâh - exalted be Allâh - and this was an innovation that differed from others.[9] In *al-Khutat* by al-Maqreezi (d. 845 AH) it says that

---

[1] *Lisân al-Mizân* by Ahmad ibn Hajar, *Hyderabad Deccan*, 3/360

[2] *al-Mujrooheen min al-Muhadditheen*, by Abu Hâtim al-Tameemi, 2/253

[3] 'Abd al-Kareem ibn Muhammad al-Sam'âni, d. 562 AH; *Tadhkirat al-Huffâz*, 4/1316

[4] *al-Ansâb* by Abu Sa'eed al-Tameemi, 7/24

[5] *Tareekh Dimashq*, by Ibn 'Asâkir, 9/328, 329

[6] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/298; *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'* by al-'Awdah, p. 54

[7] *Majmoo'at al-Fatâwa* by Ibn Taymiyah, 4/435

[8] Ibrâheem ibn Moosa, Muhammad al-Gharnâti, d. 790 AH

[9] *al-I'tisâm*, by Abu Ishâq al-Lakhmi, 2/197

'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' appeared at the time of 'Ali, saying that 'Ali was the *wasiy* (caliph appointed by the Prophet ﷺ) and would return, and promoting belief in the transmigration of souls.[1]

The Shi'ah sources which mention Ibn Saba' include the following:

Al-Kushshi narrated that Muhammad ibn Qawlawiyyah said: Sa'd ibn 'Abd-Allâh told me: Ya'qoob ibn Yazeed and Muhammad ibn 'Eesa told me, from 'Ali ibn Mahziyâr, from Faddâlah ibn Ayyoob al-Azdi, that Abân ibn 'Uthmân said: I heard Abu 'Abd-Allâh say: May Allâh curse 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' for he claimed that ['Ali] was divine, but by Allâh, ['Ali] was an obedient slave. Woe to the one who tells lies about us. If people say of us things that we do not say about ourselves, we disavow ourselves of them before Allâh.[2] The isnâd of this report is saheeh.[3]

In *al-Khisâl*, al-Qommi narrated the same report, but in connection with a different isnâd. The author of *Rawdât al-Jannât* mentioned Ibn Saba' in a quotation from Imam al-Sâdiq who cursed Ibn Saba' and accused him of lying, fabricating, broadcasting secrets and misinterpreting.[4] In his book, Dr. Sulaymân al-'Awdah mentioned a number of texts with which the Shi'ah books are filled, and their reports from 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', which are more akin to recorded documents that condemn anyone among the later Shi'ah who tries to deny the existence of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' or shed doubt on the reports that refer to him on the basis of paucity or weakness of the reports.[5]

Ibn Saba' was a real historical figure concerning whom there is no confusion in either the Sunni or Shi'i sources, earlier or later. This is also the view of most of the orientalists such as Julius

---

[1] *al-Mawâ'iz wa'l-I'tibâr bi Dhikr al-Khutat wa'l-Athâr*, by al-Maqreezi, 2/256, 257

[2] *Rijâl al-Kushshi*, 1/324

[3] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' – al-Haqeeqah al-Majhoolah*, by Muhammad 'Ali al-Mu'allim, p. 30

[4] *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'* by Sulaymân al-'Awdah, p. 62

[5] ibid.

Falhausen[1], Van Foulton[2], Levi de la Vida[3], Goldschieher[4], Ronald Nicholson[5], and Dwight Ronaldson.[6] At the same time, Ibn Saba' remains a doubtful figure or no more than a myth for a few Orientalists such as Caetani and Bernard Lewis[7], and Fred Lander who remains uncertain.[8] But we should remember that we do not rely on these authors with regard to our history.

The one who studies these sources, ancient and modern, Sunni and Shi'ah, will be certain that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' really existed and that his existence is supported by the historical reports. The books of 'aqeedah, hadeeth, biography, genealogy, literature and language also mention him a great deal. This idea was accepted by modern scholars and researchers. It seems that the first ones who shed doubt on the existence of Ibn Saba' were some of the Orientalists, then this denial was supported by the majority of modern Shi'ah, and some of them denied his existence altogether. Among modern Arab researchers there were some who admired the ideas of the Orientalists and were influenced by the books of the modern Shi'ah, but none of them have anything to support their suspicions and denials except doubt itself, which is based on speculations and assumptions.[9] Whoever wishes to find out more about the Sunni, Orientalist and Shi'i references which mention Ibn Saba' may refer to *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah* by Dr. Muhammad Amhazon, and *'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' wa Atharuhu fi Ahdâth al-Fitnah fi Sadr al-Islam*, by Dr. Sulaymân ibn Hamad al-'Awdah.

---

[1] The Khârijis and the Shi'ah, by Julius Falhuasen, p. 170

[2] al-Siyâdah al-'Arabiyyah wa'l-Shi'ah wa'l-Isra'eeliyyât, p. 80. by Van Foulton

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/312

[4] *al-'Aqeedah wa'l-Sharee'ah al-Islamiyyah*, by Goldschieher, p. 229

[5] Literary History of the Arabs during the Jâhiliyyah and early Islam, p. 235

[6] *'Aqâ'id al-Shi'ah*, p. 58

[7] Origins of Ismailism, p. 86

[8] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/312

[9] ibid.

The role of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' in stirring up *fitnah*

In the last years of 'Uthmân's caliphate, signs of trouble in the Muslim society began to loom on the horizon, due to the changes that we have mentioned. Some of the Jews seized this opportunity to stir up trouble by pretending to be Muslim and using the tactic of *taqiyah* (dissimulation). Among them was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' who is also known as Ibn al-Sawda'. Whilst we should not exaggerate about his role in the *fitnah* as some have done[1] , we should not cast doubts on it either, or think little of the role that he played as one of several factors. Rather his role was the most prominent and the most dangerous. Just as the atmosphere of *fitnah* paved the way for him, there were other factors that helped him too. All Ibn Saba' did was to spread views and beliefs that he fabricated himself, that reflected his hateful nature, and propagated them for his own purposes, namely introducing new things into the Muslim society to destroy its unity and stir up *fitnah*. So he planted seeds of division among the people. That was one of several factors that led to the murder of the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ and the division of the ummah into factions and parties.[2]

To sum up his ideas, he quoted true ideas but leapt to wrong conclusions that found acceptance among the simple-minded, extremists and those who were swayed by whims and desires. He followed convoluted ways whereby he deceived those who gathered around him. He started quoting Qur'ân and misinterpreting it in accordance with his false claims, when he said: It is strange that people believe that 'Eesa is coming back, but they do not accept that Muhammad is coming back, when Allâh says

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِى فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لَرَآدُّكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ﴾

"Verily, He Who has given you (O Muhammad ﷺ) the Qur'ân (i.e. ordered you to act on its laws and to preach it to others) will

---

[1] Such as Sa'eed al-Afghâni in his book *'Aa'ishah wa's-Siyâsah*

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif al-Sahâbah,* 1/327

surely, bring you back to Ma'âd (place of return)" (*Al-Qasas* 28:85),

and Muhammad is more deserving of coming back than 'Eesa.[1] He also resorted to false analogy in trying to claim that 'Ali ﷺ was the *wasiy* or true heir appointed by the Prophet ﷺ to succeed him, when he said: There were one thousand Prophets, and each Prophet had a *wasiy* (heir), and 'Ali was the *wasiy* of Muhammad. Then he said: Muhammad was the seal of the Prophets and 'Ali was the seal of the heirs.[2] When this idea had become entrenched in the hearts of his followers, he moved on to his ultimate aim, which was making the people rebel against the caliph 'Uthmân ﷺ. That happened to coincide with the whims and desires of some of the people when he said to them: Who does more wrong than the one who did not fulfil the final wishes of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, who pushed aside 'Ali the true heir (wasiy) of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and took control of the ummah? Then after that he told them: 'Uthmân took it unlawfully; here is the true heir of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ - get up and do something about it. Start by criticizing your governors, and pretend that you are enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, so that people will be inclined towards you, and call them to this matter.[3]

He sent out his agents and wrote to people in the regions who were corrupted by his ideas, and they wrote to him and propagated their views in secret, pretending to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. They started writing to the regions, mentioning the faults of their governors, and corresponding with their counterparts in other regions, telling them of what they were doing. They even sent letters to Madînah and spread their false propaganda all over, aiming for something other than what they appeared to be seeking. The people in the regions said: We are

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/347

[2] ibid.

[3] op. cit., 5/348

free of what others are suffering from. But the people of Madînah received letters from all over and said: we are better off than the rest of the people.[1]

From this text we can see the methods followed by Ibn Saba'. He wanted to give the impression that there was a rift between two of the *Sahâbah* by showing that one of them, 'Ali, had been deprived of his rights, whereas the other, 'Uthmân, was a usurper. Then he tried to stir up the people, especially in Kufah, against their governors in the name of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. So they started to revolt against their governors for the slightest reasons. In this campaign of his he focused on the Bedouin because he found them to be suitable material for carrying out his plan. He gained the support of the religious people among them by using the idea of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and he gained the support of those who had worldly ambitions by means of false rumours against 'Uthmân, such as the claim that he was biased in favour of his relatives and was spending money from the *bayt al-mâl* of the Muslims on them, or that he had allocated grazing land for himself only, and other accusations and criticisms by means of which Ibn Saba' managed to rally the thugs against 'Uthmân ﷺ. Then he started inciting his followers to send letters with terrible news about their cities to other provinces, so that people in all regions would think that the situation had got so bad that it could not get any worse. Those who benefited from this situation were the Saba'is, because when the people believed that, they would be able to light the spark of *fitnah* in the Muslim society.[2] 'Uthmân ﷺ realized that there were plots in other provinces, and that the ummah was facing a bad time. He said: By Allâh, the millstone (of *fitnah*) will soon start turning, and it will be better for 'Uthmân if he dies and does not set it in motion.[3]

---

[1] bid.

[2] *Al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah* by Yoosuf al-'Ishsh, p. 168; *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah*, 1/331

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/350

But the place where Ibn Saba' found his niche was in Egypt, where he started to organize his campaign against 'Uthmân ﷺ, urging the people to go to Madînah and stir up *fitnah* on the basis that 'Uthmân had become caliph unlawfully and snatched it from 'Ali, the true heir of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.[1] He deceived them by means of the letters which he claimed to have received from the senior *Sahâbah*, but when the Bedouin came to Madînah and met with the *Sahâbah*, they did not receive any encouragement from them and they denied any letters that had been attributed to them, inciting the people against 'Uthmân.[2] They found that 'Uthmân paid attention to the dues of others and he debated with them concerning that which was attributed to him, refuting their lies and explaining that his deeds were based on sincere intentions, until one of these Bedouin - Mâlik ibn al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i - said: Perhaps it is a plot that has been drawn up against him and you.[3] Al-Dhahabi is of the view that 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' started the *fitnah* in Egypt, where he planted the seeds of grudges and criticism against the governors, then against the ruler 'Uthmân.[4] But Ibn Saba' was not alone; his agents were at work among the network of conspirators, using their craftiness and trickery to recruit the religious Bedouin and others. Ibn Katheer narrated that among the causes of the incitement against 'Uthmân was the emergence of Ibn Saba', and his going to Egypt and spreading rumours among the people that he fabricated himself, and many people in Egypt were deceived.[5]

The famous historians and scholars of both the earlier and later generations of this ummah are agreed that Ibn Saba' appeared among the Muslims with ideas, plans and plots aimed at diverting the Muslims from their faith and from obeying their ruler, and spreading division and disputes among them. The

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah,* 1/330; *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/348

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah,* 1/330; *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/365

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah,* 1/331

[4] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah,* 1/338

[5] *al-Bidâyah wa'n-Nihâyah,* 7/167, 168

thugs rallied around him which led to the formation of the Saba'i group which formed one of the factors in the *fitnah* which ended with the murder of the caliph 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ. It seems that the Saba'i plots were very well organized as they were very skilled in directing their "missionaries" and spreading their ideas because they had the means of propaganda and influencing the thugs and dregs of society. They were also active in forming branches in Basra, Kufah and Egypt, exploiting tribalistic sentiments and exploiting the weak points of the Bedouin and slaves based on knowledge of what they wanted to hear.[1]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawâqif as-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah,* p. 339

Chapter 7

The Murder of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (ﷺ)

The spread of *fitnah* (turmoil)

The hate-filled liars succeeded in removing al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah from his post as governor of Kufah, and 'Uthmân (ﷺ) appointed Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas as the new governor in Kufah. When Sa'eed reached his province he ascended the minbar and after praising and glorifying Allâh he said: By Allâh, I have been sent to you and I was reluctant, but when 'Uthmân ordered me to come, I had no choice but to accept. *Fitnah* (turmoil) has raised its head among you and by Allâh I shall strike it on the face until I suppress it or it defeats me, and I shall start from today.[1] Sa'eed examined the situation in Kufah and found out about the people's attitudes. He realized how deeply rooted *fitnah* was there, and he found out that groups of rebels, hate-filled bearers of grudges and enemies of Islam were conspiring and plotting and that the view of the thugs and Bedouins was the prevalent view.[2]

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/280

[2] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 122

Sa'eed wrote a letter to the caliph 'Uthmân telling him about the deteriorating situation in Kufah. Among other things, he said: The people of Kufah are in a bad way and the people of honour and those who became Muslim early on and served Islam are suppressed. Those who are prevailing in this land are the lowest class of people and the ignorant Bedouin, so you hardly see anyone there who is noble or who has a history of Islam and *jihad*. 'Uthmân (ﷺ) responded with a letter in which he asked him to rearrange things in Kufah, to list the people in order of seniority in Islam and contribution to *jihad*, and to give precedence to those who were knowledgeable and sincere and had a history of *jihad* over others. Among other things he said: Give precedence to those who became Muslim early on and served Islam, at whose hands Allâh caused that land to be conquered. Make the Bedouin who came to the land after it was conquered followers of the *mujaahideen* who preceded them, unless those who preceded them have become slow and have started to neglect *jihad* and support of the truth, and those who came later have taken on that mission. Recognize the position of each man there and give them all their dues fairly, for knowledge of the people will ensure fairness among them.[1] Sa'eed carried out the instruction of 'Uthmân (ﷺ) and told the caliph what he had done. 'Uthmân assembled the decision-makers in Madînah and told them of the situation in Kufah and how deeply-rooted *fitnah* was and the steps that Ibn al-'Aas had taken to confront it. They said: You did the right thing; do not help the people of *fitnah* in any way and do not let them become leaders of the people, and do not appoint them to positions to which they are not entitled, for if you appoint one who is not qualified he will not do a good job, rather he will spread mischief. 'Uthmân said to them: O people of Madînah, the people are already planning to start *fitnah* so be prepared to confront it. Adhere to the truth and I shall inform you of the latest developments as they come.[2]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/280

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/281

The followers of whims and desires were upset with the reforms

The thugs and rough Bedouin were upset with the preference that was shown in gatherings and with regard to being given positions of leadership and being consulted, to those who had come to Islam earlier, had contributed to *jihad* and who were knowledgeable and pious. They began to criticize their governors for showing preference to those people and consulting them in exclusion to them, and they regarded that as favouritism, bad treatment and exclusion. Those who bore grudges exploited this and started to instil hatred of the caliph and the state and a refusal to accept the reforms of the governor Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas, and they spread rumours against him among the people. The common folk of Kufah rejected the words of the hate-filled rebels so the latter began to keep quiet and keep their specious arguments to themselves and not discuss them openly, because most of the Muslims rejected them. But they discussed them with the Bedouin and thugs who supported them, and those who had been subjected to *ta'zeer* punishments.[1]

The enemies of Islam, the Jews, Christians and Magians, were conspiring against Islam and the Muslims, spreading false rumours against the caliph and the governors, and making the most of mistakes committed by some of them to incite the common folk against them, adding a lot of lies and forged letters to it. Their aim in doing so was to spread chaos and deepen divisions between the Muslims, thus satisfying their hatred of Islam which had put an end to their false religions and destroyed their states and armies. In order to achieve these aims, these enemies recruited the thugs, fools and hooligans, and those who bore grudges at having been disciplined or punished by the caliph or one of his governors rallied around them. They formed an evil secret society whose members were the ones who responded to their call. So they gained followers in many major cities and other

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 14

regions, and formed a secret communications network. The most important branches of this evil network were in Kufah, Basra and Egypt, and there were also some elements in Madînah and Syria.[1]

The Jew 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' was the head of the gang

Ibn Saba' told his criminal followers in his evil secret society, who were spread throughout the Muslim lands: Start executing the plan now. Stir up trouble and start criticizing your rulers and governors who have been appointed by the caliph. Pretend to be enjoining that which is good and forbidding that which is evil so that you can win people over to your side and call them to join you.[2] 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' sent his envoys to all regions, and sent letters to his followers whom he had managed to corrupt and make them join him, and they wrote to him. His followers in different regions began to take action, calling their followers in secret to begin the planned rebellion against the governors and the caliph, and to work towards the dismissal of 'Uthmân from the position of caliph. They pretended to enjoin that which is good and forbid that which is evil, so that they could influence the people and deceive them and win them over. The followers of Ibn Saba' began to fabricate lies about the faults of their governors and rulers, and they spread them by means of letters that they sent to one another in different regions. So the people in each region began to send letters filled with lies to the people in other regions, and the people of each region read those falsified letters to the people who were with them. Thus the people heard about the faults of governors in other provinces and they said: We are safe from the problems that Muslims are facing in that land, and they believed what they heard. Thus the followers of Ibn Saba' were able to spread mischief among the Muslims throughout the land and create division among them, shattering the bonds of

---

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 124

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/348

brotherhood and unity and inciting the people against their governors and rulers, and spreading lies against the caliph 'Uthmân himself. They carried out these well-planned crimes in a skilful manner, aiming at something other than what they seemed to want, which was to dismiss 'Uthmân and put an end to the Islamic state.[1]

Ibn Saba' went to Syria to corrupt and influence some of its people, but he did not succeed in his devilish aim, because Mu'âwiyah (ﷺ) was watching him.[2] He went to Basra to recruit his followers from among the evil-doers, grudge-bearers, hooligans and thugs. The governor of Basra was 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir ibn Kurayz, who was a man of resolve, just and righteous. When Ibn Saba' reached Basra, he stayed with an evil man who lived there, a ruthless thief by the name of Hakeem ibn Jablah.[3]

'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir heard that there was a stranger staying with Hakeem ibn Jablah, and Hakeem ibn Jablah was a thief. When the armies of *jihad* returned to Basra, Hakeem would stay behind to spread mischief in the Persian lands and raid the lands of *ahl al-dhimmah* and the Muslims, taking from them whatever he wanted. The *ahl al-dhimmah* and the Muslims complained to 'Uthmân about him, and 'Uthmân wrote to 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, telling him: Detain Hakeem ibn Jablah in Basra and do not let him leave the city until you think that he has come to his senses. So Ibn 'Aamir put him under house arrest and he could no longer leave Basra. Whilst the thief Ibn Jablah was under house arrest, the Jew 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' came and stayed with him. Ibn Saba' took advantage of the fact that Ibn Jablah was a mean, hate-filled thug and recruited him for his cause, and Ibn Jablah became his man in Basra, introducing Ibn Saba' to other deviants like him. Ibn Saba' instilled his ideas in their hearts and recruited them into his secret society. When Ibn 'Aamir found out about Ibn Saba', he summoned him and said to

---

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 126

[2] ibid.

[3] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 129

him: Who are you? He said: Ibn Saba'; I am a man from among the people of the Book who liked Islam and became Muslim, and I wanted to be close to you and settle near you. Ibn 'Aamir said: What is this talk that I have heard about you? Get away from me. So Ibn 'Aamir expelled him from Basra and Ibn Saba' departed, leaving behind some of his followers there and having established a branch of his party there.

Ibn Saba' went to Kufah where he found deviant types who were prepared to accept him, so he recruited them for his group. When Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas found out about him, he expelled him from Kufah, and he headed for Egypt, where he settled and put down roots, spreading corruption and mischief. He attracted a following of thugs and fools, those who bore grudges and sinners and evildoers. Ibn Saba' organized secret communications between his base in Egypt and his followers in Madînah, Basra and Kufah, and his men moved between these regions.[1] Ibn Saba' and his followers continued their efforts for six years, so their fiendish efforts began in 30 AH and finally succeeded at the end of 35 AH in killing the caliph 'Uthmân, and their mischief continued throughout the caliphate of 'Ali (ﷺ). The Saba'is decided to start their *fitnah* in Kufah.[2]

Mischief-makers causing trouble in the *majlis* of Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas

One day in 33 AH, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas was sitting in his public *majlis* with ordinary people around him, talking and conversing with one another. These Saba'i rebels slipped into the *majlis* and tried to cause trouble and stir up *fitnah*.

There was a debate going on in the *majlis* between Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and one of those present, a man by the name of Khunays ibn Hubaysh al-Asadi, who disagreed concerning some matter. Seven of the rebels and mischief makers were sitting there, among

[1] op. cit., p. 129

[2] op. cit., p. 130

whom was Jundub al-Azdi, whose thieving son had been executed because of his involvement in a case of murder, along with al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i, Ibn al-Kawa' and Sa'sa'ah ibn Sawhaan. The troublemakers took advantage of the opportunity and started hitting Khunays al-Asadi. When his father got up to help him, they hit him too. Sa'eed tried to stop the beating but they would not stop. The man and his son lost consciousness because the beating was so severe. Banu Asad came to avenge their people and it almost led to war between the two sides, but Sa'eed was able to sort things out.[1] When 'Uthmân found out about the incident, he asked Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas to deal with it wisely, and to suppress the *fitnah* as much as he could.

The hate-filled rebels went home and spread rumours and lies against Sa'eed and 'Uthmân, and against the people of Kufah and its prominent figures. The people of Kufah got upset with them and asked Sa'eed to punish them. Sa'eed said to them: 'Uthmân has forbidden me to do that, but if you want you can tell him about it. The nobles and righteous people of Kufah wrote to 'Uthmân telling him about that group, and asking him to expel them and banish them from Kufah, because they were causing mischief in the city. 'Uthmân told his governor Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas to expel them from Kufah. There were more than ten men, and Sa'eed sent them to Mu'âwiyah in Syria on the orders of 'Uthmân. 'Uthmân wrote to Mu'âwiyah telling him about them, and said: The people of Kufah have expelled some people for whom *fitnah* is second nature, and sent them to you; threaten them, instil fear in them, discipline them and punish them, then if you feel that they have come to their senses, accept that from them.[2] Among those who were banished to Syria were: al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i, Jundub al-Azdi, Sa'sa'ah ibn Sawhaan, Kameel ibn Ziyaad, 'Umayr ibn Daabi' and Ibn al-Kawa'.[3]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/323

[2] op. cit., 5/324

[3] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen*, p. 131

The exiles from Kufah with Mu'âwiyah

When they came to Mu'âwiyah he welcomed them and let them stay in a church called Maryam, and he supplied them with provisions on 'Uthmân's orders, as he had supplied them with provisions in Iraq, and he ate lunch and dinner with them every day. One day he said to them: You are Arab people who have teeth and tongues; you have been honoured with Islam and you prevailed over other nations, inheriting their wealth and positions. I have heard that you bear a grudge against Quraysh but if it were not for Quraysh you would have remained in a low position as you were before.[1]

'Uthmân understood that Mu'âwiyah was able to deal with them, because he was eloquent, patient and smart enough to confront the *fitnah*. Because of that, as soon as there was a problem, 'Uthmân was able to send them to Mu'âwiyah so that he could solve it. Indeed, Mu'âwiyah (ﷺ) did his utmost to convince these people. First of all, he treated them well, sitting with them and mixing with them in order to find out what was in their hearts before he passed judgement on them on the basis of what he heard. After they began to feel relaxed with him and let down their guard, he realized that tribalism and the desire for power were their motives, so he had no choice but to highlight two issues to them:

1- How Islam had honoured the Arabs

2- The role of Quraysh in spreading Islam.

If Islam had had any impact on them, they would have appreciated what he said. After that, he told them what the Arabs used to be, and how Islam had turned them into a single nation with a single leader, and they had left behind a life of chaos, bloodshed and foul tribalism.[2]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/324

[2] *Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân* by Muneer al-Ghadbaan, p. 101

Mu'âwiyah followed that by saying: Your leaders are a shield for you, so do not abandon your shield. Your rulers today treat you with patience and take care of you. By Allâh, you should stop or else Allâh will punish you with rulers who will mistreat you, then you will not be praised for your patience, then you will be their partners in sin for the injustice that you will have brought upon the people, during your life and after your death. One of the people said: As for what you have said about Quraysh, they were never the most numerous or strongest of the Arabs during the *Jaahiliyyah*, such that you could scare us with them. As for what you have said about a shield, if the shield is breached, then we could get hurt. Mu'âwiyah said: I know you now. I know that what has led you to this attitude is a lack of maturity. You are the spokesman of the people but you do not make any sense to me. I am trying to remind you of the greatness of Islam and you remind me of the *Jaahiliyyah*? I am exhorting you and you claim that the shield that is protecting you can be breached? Even if it is breached, it is not the fault of the shield.[1]

Mu'âwiyah realized that mere hints would not convince them; he had no choice but to explain in detail about Quraysh first of all. So he said: Try to understand, although I do not think that you will understand. Quraysh was never raised in status during the *Jaahiliyyah* or in Islam except by Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted. They were never the greatest or the strongest of the Arabs, but they were the noblest in descent and the purest in lineage, the best in character and attitude. They were not in a position of safety during the *Jaahiliyyah* when the people were killing one another, except by the help of Allâh; no one can be humiliated whom He honours. Do you know of any people, Arab or non-Arab, black or red, whose land was stricken with calamity and violated at the same time, except for Quraysh? No one ever plotted against them but Allâh brought him low, then when Allâh wanted to save those whom He had honoured and who had followed His religion from humiliation in this world and a bad

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/324

end in the Hereafter, He chose for that mission the best of His creation, then He chose for him companions the best of whom were Quraysh, then He built this great kingdom on that foundation and established this caliphate among them, and no one could be fit for that except them. So Allâh was taking care of them as they were following His religion, and He protected them against the kings who were subjugating you during the *Jaahiliyyah*. Woe to you and your companions! I wish that someone else had spoken instead of you, but you rushed to speak first. As for you, O Sa'sa'ah, your town is the worst of Arab towns, with the least produce, the deepest valleys, the most familiar with evil and the meanest to its neighbours. No one, noble or lowly, stayed there but he was reviled and mistreated. Moreover, they are the worst in using offensive nicknames, the worst sons-in-law, the dregs of the nations. You are on the border and you were controlled by the Persians when the call of the Prophet (ﷺ) reached you. But you were not there with your people; you were in Oman, not in Bahrain, so the call of the Prophet (ﷺ) did not include you, and you are the worst of your people. When Islam made you prominent and made you prevail over nations that used to rule you, now you aim to distort the religion of Allâh and you demonstrate your meanness. This does not affect Quraysh in the slightest and it will never harm them or prevent them from doing their duty. The Shaytaan is not unaware of you; he knew that you are the most evil of your people and he has misled the people through you. He is going to be the cause of your doom. He knows that he will not be able to change the decree by means of you, or change any decree of Allâh. There is nothing that you can achieve by means of evil actions but Allâh will punish you with something more evil or more humiliating than it. Then he stood up and left, and they started muttering amongst themselves.[1]

Thus Mu'âwiyah did his utmost to convince them on an intellectual and political level.

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/326

- First of all he highlighted to them the position of Quraysh in the *Jahiliyyah* and in Islam.
- He discussed the tribes that these people came from and their position during the Jaahiliyyah, as they lived in an area with a bad climate and poor vegetation from a natural point of view, then their humiliation and subjugation to the Persians from a political point of view, until Allâh honoured them with Islam and raised them in status after they had been humiliated.
- Mu'âwiyah spoke of the track record of their spokesman Sa'sa'ah ibn Sawhaan, who had been very slow in responding to the call of Islam after his people had become Muslim, then he came back and joined Islam, and Islam raised him in status after he had been brought low.
- Mu'âwiyah (ﷺ) exposed the plots of Sa'sa'ah and his companions, how they were seeking to stir up turmoil and in fact wanted to damage the religion of Allâh.

The Shaytaan was the mastermind behind this evil plot, thus Mu'âwiyah made the connection between the history of this ummah and the help of Allâh, then Islam and true faith *('aqeedah)*. Then he exposed the spurious nature of this group and he exposed every single one of them and their plots, and demonstrated that the motive behind the plots was tribalism.[1]

Another meeting

Then Mu'âwiyah came to them the next day and talked to them at length, then he said: O people, respond to me in a good manner, or else keep quiet and think; think of that which will benefit you, your families, your tribes and all of the Muslims. Seek that and you could live and we could live happily with you.

Sa'sa'ah said: You have no right to say that, and there is no way that you should be obeyed when it involves disobedience towards Allâh. Mu'âwiyah said: Is it not the case that the first thing I did was enjoin you to fear Allâh and obey Him, and obey

[1] *Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân*, p. 111

His Prophet (ﷺ), and hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh, and be not divided among yourselves (cf. *Aal 'Imraan* 3:103)? They said: No, you ordered us to be divided and you told us something different from what the Prophet (ﷺ) said. He said: I am ordering you now, if I did that, then I repent to Allâh and I order you to fear Him and obey Him and obey His Prophet (ﷺ), and adhere to the main body of Muslims and avoid division, and show respect to your leaders and guide them to what is good as much as you can, and exhort them kindly and gently if they make a mistake. Sa'sa'ah said: And we enjoin you to give up your post, for among the Muslims there is one who is more qualified for it than you. Mu'âwiyah said: Who is that? They said: One whose father has more seniority in Islam than your father, and he himself has more seniority in Islam than you. Mu'âwiyah said: By Allâh, I have seniority in Islam and there are others who have more seniority than me, but there is no one in my time who is more able to do what I am doing than me. This was the opinion of 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb concerning me. If someone else was more able than me, 'Umar would not have compromised with me or with anyone else. I have not done anything wrong for which I should be dismissed from my post. If the caliph and the community had thought that, he would have written with his own hand and I would have given up my post. If Allâh decreed that he should do that, I would hope that his decision would be the right one. Be careful, for what you are doing is what the *shaytaan* wishes and tells others to do. By Allâh, if matters were carried out as you wish, then nothing would be done in the right way to the people of Islam by day or by night. But Allâh decrees and arranges and whatever He decrees is what comes to pass. But they persisted and said: You are not qualified for that. Mu'âwiyah said: By Allâh, Allâh is Severe in punishment and I fear that if you continue to obey the shaytaan, your obedience to the shaytaan and your disobedience of the Most Merciful will expose you to the vengeance of Allâh in this world and eternal humiliation in the Hereafter. They pounced on him and grabbed him by the head and beard, and he said to them: Stop it! This is not Kufah. By

Allâh, if the people of Syria see what you have done to me when I am their leader, I would not be able to stop them from killing you. Then he got up and left, and said: By Allâh, I will never meet with them again so long as I live.[1]

Mu'âwiyah, the governor of Syria, put all his effort into this final attempt, tackling the problem with patience, knowledge and self-control in order to divert them from *fitnah*. He called on them to fear Allâh and obey Him, and to adhere to the main body of Muslims and avoid division, but they responded with all arrogance saying: You have no right to be obeyed in disobedience to Allâh.[2] But he responded with extreme patience, reminding them that he was not enjoining anything but obedience to Allâh, and even if what they said was true, he declared his repentance to Allâh from the sin, if it had happened. Then he called them once again to obey Allâh and adhere to the main body of Muslims, and to keep away from creating division in the ummah. If exhortation could have had any effect on them, then their hearts should have been touched by this kind and patient treatment, but they viewed it as weakness and negligence, especially since he was telling them to use kind and peaceful means when exhorting and giving advice. Now they found an opportunity to expose what was in their hearts and they said: We enjoin you to give up your post, for among the Muslims there is one who is more qualified than you. Suddenly Mu'âwiyah realized what they were hiding, and he wanted to know more about that mysterious side of them, in hopes of finding out what was motivating them and instilling these false notions in their minds. But they concealed it, and all they did was indicate that they wanted him to give up his job to someone better, one whose father was better than his father. He continued to be even more patient with them, despite their rudeness towards him and their telling him to give up his position. Here we see how Mu'âwiyah gave them a detailed answer describing his view on ruling,

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/330-331

[2] op. cit., 5/330

governorship and leadership. Mu'âwiyah summed up his answer in six basic, important points:

1- That he had seniority in Islam and he had been guarding the borders of Syria since the death of his brother Yazeed ibn Abi Sufyân (ﷺ).

2- There were among the Muslims those who were better than him, who were more senior and who had made more sacrifices, but he was the most qualified to protect this important Muslim border region (Syria). Since his appointment he had been able to rule it and control it, and he understood the psychology of its people, so they loved him.

3- The standard by which governors were to be measured was 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ), who fought in the way of Allâh, and never feared the blame of the blamers (al-Maa'idah 5:54). If he had seen any misconduct, deviance or weakness in Mu'âwiyah, he would have dismissed him and would not have kept him even for a single day. He worked for him throughout his caliphate; before that the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had appointed him for some tasks, including appointing him as a scribe to write down the Revelation, and Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq had also appointed him, and no one had questioned his abilities.

4- If he were to give up his post, there should be a good reason for him having to do so. What evidence did those who promoted turmoil have that Mu'âwiyah should give up his post?

5- It was not up to these agitators to decide whether he should be dismissed from his post or remain as governor. That was the right of the caliph 'Uthmân (ﷺ), who had the right to appoint and dismiss governors.

6- If 'Uthmân (ﷺ) decided to dismiss Mu'âwiyah some day, he was confident that it would all work out well in the end, and he would take no offence at that, because he was a governor who was under the authority of the caliph of the Muslims.[1]

The end of this meeting was regrettable and sad, because he wanted to warn them against the wrath and punishment of Allâh and against the temptation of the shaytaan and the slippery slope to which it would lead, and against division and disobeying the ruler, and against giving in to their whims and desires and being arrogant. And what was their response? They pounced on him and grabbed him by the head and beard, and at some point he rebuked them and said harsh words that carried an implied threat. He realized that these people would never follow the right path, so he had to tell the caliph 'Uthmân (ﷺ) about them and the real danger that they posed, so that he could decide about them.[2]

Mu'âwiyah's letter to 'Uthmân about the troublemakers in Kufah

Mu'âwiyah wrote to 'Uthmân (ﷺ) saying: In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. To the slave of Allâh 'Uthmân, the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, from Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân. O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you sent to me some people who speak with the tongues of devils and say what these devils wants them to say. They come to the people and support their arguments with the Qur'ân, as they claim, and they confuse the people. Not everyone realizes what they are up to. All they want is to create division and *fitnah*. They are fed up with Islam and the shaytaan has full control of their hearts. They have corrupted many people among whom they lived in Kufah, and I am worried that if they stay among the people of Syria they may mislead them

[1] *Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân, Sahaabi Kabeer wa Malik Mujaahid*, p. 114-117

[2] *Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân* by al-Ghadbaan, p. 117, 118

with their influence and immorality. It is better to send them back to their own region and let them live in the place where their hypocrisy started.[1]

E. Return of the troublemakers to Kufah followed by their expulsion to al-Jazeerah

'Uthmân wrote to Sa'eed ibn al-Aas and sent them back to him, but they only became more active in evildoing when they returned. Sa'eed wrote to 'Uthmân complaining about them, and 'Uthmân wrote to Sa'eed telling him to send them to 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid ibn al-Waleed - who was the governor of Homs. When they reached 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid ibn al-Waleed he summoned them and spoke sternly to them, saying to them, among other things: O tools of the shaytaan, you are not welcome here. The shaytaan went back defeated and lost, but you are still active in falsehood. May 'Abd al-Rahmaan be doomed if he does not discipline and humiliate you. O people who I do not know whether you are Arabs or Persians, you will never be able to speak to me as you spoke to Sa'eed or Mu'âwiyah. I am the son of Khaalid ibn al-Waleed, I am the son of one who was toughened by his experiences, I am the son of the one who defeated apostasy, and by Allâh I shall humiliate you. 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid let them stay with him for a whole month, during which he treated them with the utmost strictness and harshness, and was not soft with them as Sa'eed and Mu'âwiyah had been. If he walked, they walked with him; if he rode, they rode with him; if he went out on a military campaign, they went out with him. He did not miss any opportunity to humiliate them. Every time he met their leader, Sa'sa'ah ibn Sawhaan, he said to him: O son of sin, do you know that if a person cannot be disciplined by good means, he will be disciplined by bad means, and if he cannot be disciplined by a soft approach he will be disciplined by a hard approach? And he told them: Why are you not answering back as you used to answer back to Sa'eed in Kufah and Mu'âwiyah in

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/331

Syria? Why do you not address me as you used to address them?

The method of 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid worked with them. His harshness silenced them and they showed repentance and regret. They said to him: We repent to Allâh and ask His forgiveness. Forgive us and pardon us, may Allâh forgive you and pardon you. The people stayed in al-Jazeerah with 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid, and 'Abd al-Rahmaan sent one of their leaders - al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i - to 'Uthmân, to tell him of their repentance and reform, and that they had ceased their troublemaking. 'Uthmân said to al-Ashtar: Go and live wherever you want, you and those who are with you, for I have forgiven you. Al-Ashtar said: We want to stay with 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid ibn al-Waleed, and he told him about the virtue and resolve of 'Abd ar-Rahmaan. So they stayed with 'Abd al-Rahmaan in al-Jazeerah for a while, appearing outwardly to have repented and to have mended their ways.[1] The troublemakers in Kufah were quiet for a while. This lasted for a few months in 33 AH, after the leaders of turmoil had been banished to Mu'âwiyah in Syria, then to 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid. The troublemakers in Kufah decided that it was in their best interests to keep quiet for a while.[2]

The troublemakers in Basra fabricate lies against Ashajj 'Abd al-Qays

The troublemakers in Basra, under the leadership of Hakeem ibn Jablah, were against the people of virtue in the city. They conspired against them and told lies about them. One of the best and most pious of the people of Basra was Ashajj 'Abd al-Qays, whose real name was 'Aamir ibn 'Abd al-Qays. He was a leader of his people who had come to the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and learned from him, and the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had praised him when he said:

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/327

[2] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 134

«إِنَّ فِيكَ خَصْلَتَيْنِ يُحِبُّهُمَا اللهُ: الحِلْمُ وَالأَنَاةُ»

"You have two characteristics that Allâh loves : forbearance and deliberation."[1]

'Aamir ibn 'Abd al-Qays was one of the leaders of *jihad* in al-Qaadisiyyah and elsewhere. He lived in Basra and he was a man of great righteousness and piety. The rebels told lies about him and made false accusations against him, so 'Uthmân told him to go to Mu'âwiyah in Syria. When Mu'awiyah spoke to him, he realized that he was innocent and sincere, and that the rebels were fabricating lies against him. The architect of these lies against 'Aamir ibn 'Abd al-Qays was Hamraan ibn Abaan, who was a sinful man with no religious commitment. He had married a woman during her *'iddah*, and when 'Uthmân found out about that, he separated them and beat him as discipline for having sinned, and banished him to Basra, where he met the leader of the Saba'is in that city, the thief Hakeem ibn Jablah.[2]

Ibn Saba' designated the year 34 AH for action

In 34 AH - the eleventh year of 'Uthmân's caliphate - 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' finalized his plans and made arrangements with his followers to begin the rebellion against the caliph and his governors. From his den of conspiracy in Egypt, Ibn Saba' got in touch with his devilish followers in Basra, Kufah and Madînah, and agreed with them on the details of the rebellion, and they corresponded with one another concerning that. Among his correspondents were the Saba'is in Kufah. There were more than ten men, some of whom had been exiled to Syria, then to al-Jazeerah where they stayed with 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid ibn al-Waleed. After the exile of these rebels, the hateful Saba'i leader in Kufah was Yazeed ibn Qays.[3] In 34 AH, Kufah was devoid of prominent figures because they were all out on

[1] *Saheeh as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah*, p. 635, At-Tirmidhi (2011)

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/333, 334

[3] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 135

campaign, fighting in *jihad* for the sake of Allâh, and there was no one left in the city but the hooligans and thugs who were influenced by the deviant Saba'is, who filled their minds with their evil ideas and incited them against 'Uthmân's governor in Kufah, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas.[1]

The situation in Kufah when the troublemakers made their move

al-Tabari said of the situation in Kufah in 34 AH: Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas went to 'Uthmân in the eleventh year of 'Uthmân's rule, and before he left, he sent al-Ash'ath ibn Qays to Azerbaijan, Sa'eed ibn Qays to al-Rayy, al-Nusayr al-'Ajali to Hamadhaan, al-Saa'ib ibn al-Aqra' to Asbahaan, Maalik ibn Habeeb to Maah, Hakeem ibn Salaamah to Mosul, Jareer ibn 'Abd-Allâh to Qarqeesa, Salmaan ibn Rabee'ah to al-Baab, and 'Utaybah ibn al-Nahhaas to Hulwaan. He appointed al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr al-Tameemi as commander-in-chief, and he appointed 'Amr ibn Hurayth as his deputy after he left. Thus Kufah became empty of prominent figures and no one was left there except those who were insignificant or who were among the troublemakers.[2] It was in this atmosphere that the Saba'i leader in Kufah, Yazeed ibn Qays, emerged with the agreement of the devilish Ibn Saba' in Egypt, accompanied by the troublemakers who had joined the secret society of Ibn Saba', and the thugs who were influenced by this group.[3]

al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr al-Tameemi put an end to the first action

Yazeed ibn Qays emerged in Kufah, aiming to depose 'Uthmân. He entered the mosque and sat there, and the Saba'is to whom Ibn as-Sawda' had written from Egypt joined him in the mosque. When the rebels gathered in the mosque, al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr, the commander-in-chief, came to know of them, so he

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/337

[3] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 136

arrested them along with their leader Yazeed ibn Qays. When Yazeed saw how tough and alert al-Qa'qaa' was, he did not disclose their plan of rebelling against the caliph 'Uthmân and deposing him. He pretended that all he and his group wanted to do was to bring about the dismissal of the governor Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and ask for another governor in his place. So al-Qa'qaa' let the group go when he heard the words of Yazeed, then he said to Yazeed: Do not gather for this purpose in the mosque, and do not meet with anyone; stay in your house. Seek what you want from the caliph and you will achieve what you want.[1]

Yazeed ibn Qays wrote to the troublemakers who were with 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid

Yazeed ibn Qays stayed in his house, and he was forced to change his plans for rebellion and turmoil. This Saba'i - Yazeed ibn Qays -hired a man, giving him money and a mule, and told him to quickly and in secret go to the Saba'is from Kufah whom 'Uthmân had exiled to Syria, then to al-Jazeerah, who were staying with 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid ibn al-Waleed, and who had made a show of having repented and regretted their actions. Yazeed said in his letter to his devilish brethren: When this letter of mine reaches you, do not let it fall from your hands before you come to me, for we have corresponded with our brothers in Egypt - the Saba'is in that land - and we have agreed to launch the rebellion. When al-Ashtar read the letter of Yazeed, he immediately left for Kufah, joined by other rebels. 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid noticed that they were missing and he could not find them, then he sent a group to look for them, and they could not find them either. Yazeed ibn Qays got in touch with his group once again, and his group contacted the hooligans and thugs in Kufah, and they gathered in the mosque. al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i entered upon them in the mosque, and started stirring them up and motivating them to rebel. Among other things, he said to them: I have come to you from the caliph 'Uthmân, and I

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/337

left your governor Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas with him. 'Uthmân and Sa'eed have agreed to reduce your stipends from two hundred dirhams to one hundred. Al-Ashtar was telling lies, because 'Uthmân and Sa'eed had not discuss that, but the plan of the Saba'is was to spread lies and provoke the masses. Al-Ashtar stirred up the people in the mosque, and the hooligans and thugs became excited, and there was a great deal of noise in the mosque. The wise Muslims, those who were prominent people and righteous, began speaking to him, such as Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Mas'ood and al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr, but he did not listen to them or respond to them.[1] Yazeed ibn Qays shouted to the hooligans and thugs inside and outside the mosque: I am going to go out to the road to Madînah, to prevent Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas from entering Kufah. Whoever wants to go out with me to prevent Sa'eed from entering and to demand a new governor, let him do so. The Saba'is and thugs responded to his call, and nearly one thousand of them went out with him.[2]

al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr thought that the leaders of the troublemakers should be executed

When the Saba'is and thugs went out, seeking to rebel and stir up turmoil and trouble, the prominent Muslims and people of deliberation and wisdom stayed in the mosque. The governor's deputy, 'Amr ibn Hurayth, ascended the minbar and asked the Muslims to remain united and told them not to be divided, and he called on them not to respond to the rebels.[3] Al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr said: Can you stop the flood or divert the Euphrates from its course? No way. No, by Allâh, nothing will stop these thugs but the sword, and soon all the blessings that they are enjoying will vanish, and they will wish to have them back but they will never be able to. So be patient. He said: I will be patient. Then he left and went back to his house.[4]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/338; *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 138

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/338

[3] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 139

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/338

The troublemakers prevented Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas from entering Kufah

Yazeed ibn Qays and al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i led thousands of rebels to a place on the road to Madînah that was called al-Jara'ah. Whilst they were camping in al-Jara'ah, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas saw them as he was returning from his meeting with 'Uthmân. They said to him: Go back from whence you came, for we have no need of you and we will not let you enter Kufah. Tell 'Uthmân that we do not want a governor, and we want 'Uthmân to give us Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari as a governor instead of you. Sa'eed said to them: Why have a thousand of you come to tell me this, when it would have been sufficient for you to send one man to the caliph, and send one man to stand on the road to tell me this. Do you think that one thousand men with any sense would come out to confront one man?[1]

Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas thought it wise not to confront them or fan the flames of turmoil (*fitnah*), rather he tried to extinguish it or at least delay it. This was also the view of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, 'Amr ibn Hurayth and al-Qa'qaa' ibn 'Amr in Kufah.[2] Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas went back to 'Uthmân and told him about the rebels, and 'Uthmân said to him: What do they want? Are they refusing to obey? Have they rebelled against the caliph and declared their refusal to obey him? Sa'eed said to him: No. What they said is that they do not want me as their governor, and they want someone else instead of me. 'Uthmân said to him: Who do they want as a governor? Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas said: They want Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. 'Uthmân said: Then we will appoint Abu Moosa as their governor. By Allâh, we will never give anyone any excuse, and we shall certainly be patient with them as is expected of us, until we find out what they really want. And 'Uthmân wrote to Abu Moosa appointing him as governor of Kufah.[3]

---

[1] ibid.

[2] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 104

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/339

Before the letter appointing Abu Moosa as governor arrived, there were some of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) in the mosque of Kufah who tried to calm things down, but they were not able to do that, because the Saba'is and haters had gained control over the hooligans and thugs and stirred them up, and they would no longer listen to any voice of reason or logic. At the time of the rebellion and turmoil there were two of the companions of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) in the mosque of Kufah, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan and Abu Mas'ood 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir al-Ansâri al-Badri. Abu Mas'ood was very angry about this rebellion of the hooligans and their going out to al-Jara'ah, dismissing the governor Sa'eed and disobeying him, which was the first time this had happened. Hudhayfah, on the other hand, was more far-sighted and he dealt with the incident objectively and wisely.[1] Abu Mas'ood said to Hudhayfah: They will not come back safe from al-Jara'ah; the caliph will send an army to discipline them and many of them will be killed. Hudhayfah replied: By Allâh, they will come back to Kufah and there will be no fighting and no bloodshed. There is nothing I am learning about this but I already learned it from the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) when he was still alive, because he told us about these turmoils that we are seeing today before he died. The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) told us that a man would be a Muslim in the morning then when evening came he would have nothing of Islam left in him, then he would fight the Muslims and apostatize, and his heart would be turned upside down, and Allâh would cause him to die the next day, and that will happen later on.[2] Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan specialized n knowledge of turmoil *(al-fitan)* and he dealt with the turmoil of the Saba'is in Kufah and elsewhere on the basis of what he had heard and learned from the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), bearing in mind what he had memorized of those ahaadeeth. He understood the reality of what was going on

---

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen*, p. 141

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/342

around him and did not find it odd at all, but he tried to sort it out as much as he could.[1]

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari tried to calm things down and tell the people not to rebel

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ) tried to calm things down and told the people not to be disobedient. He said to them: O people, do not rebel any more and do not disobey any more. Adhere to your community *(jamaa'ah)* and be obedient. Beware of haste; be patient and soon you will have a new governor. They said: Lead us in prayer. He said: No, not unless you confirm your obedience to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. They said: We pledge to listen to and obey 'Uthmân.[2]

But they did not say that with any sincerity, rather they were concealing their true aims from others. Abu Moosa led the people in prayer until the letter of 'Uthmân came, appointing him as governor of Kufah. When things calmed down in Kufah for a while - in 34 AH - Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan went back to Azerbaijan, leading the armies of *jihad* there, and the agents and governors went back to their work in Persia.[3]

'Uthmân's letter to the rebels in Kufah

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân wrote a letter to the rebels in Kufah in which he explained the reason why he had responded to their demands to dismiss Sa'eed and appoint Abu Moosa in his place. This is a letter of great significance which explains the way in which 'Uthmân confronted the turmoil and how he tried to delay its outbreak as much as he could, even though he was certain that it was inevitable and he would not be able to stop it. This is what he had learned from the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ). 'Uthmân said to them in his letter: I have appointed over you the one whom you have chosen, and I have dismissed Sa'eed. By Allâh, I shall do my

---

[1] *Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan* by Ibraaheem al-'Ali, p. 86; *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 141

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/339

[3] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 142

utmost and I shall be very patient with you, and I shall do what is in your best interests as much as I can. Ask me for everything that you want, so long as it does not involve any disobedience towards Allâh, and I will grant you it. Tell me about all that you dislike so long as it does not involve any disobedience towards Allâh, and I will let you off. I shall go along with what you want so that you will have no excuse to go against me. He also wrote similar letters to other provinces.[1] May Allâh be pleased with the caliph 'Uthmân; how good he was and how open-hearted, and how greatly was he wronged by the Saba'is, rebels and haters who told lies against him.[2]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/343

[2] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 143

'Uthmân's policy in dealing with the turmoil *(fitnah)*

From the historical texts in a number of sources it is clear that 'Uthmân confronted the turmoil in a number of ways, as follows:

Some of the *Sahâbah* thought that 'Uthmân should send committees to investigate the matter

Muhammad ibn Maslamah, Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh and others were shocked by what they heard of the rumours spread by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' in the regions. They entered upon the caliph 'Uthmân in haste and said: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, have you heard what we have heard from the people? He said: No, by Allâh, I have only heard good things. They said: We have heard such and such, and they told him what they had heard about turmoil spreading throughout the Muslim provinces, and about the vicious attacks on the governors in every place. He said: You are my partners and witnesses for the believers; advise me. They said: We advise you to send men whom you trust to the provinces so that they may find out what is going on.[1] 'Uthmân took a wise decision and did what had to be done. He chose a group of the *Sahâbah* whose piety and sincerity no one could dispute. He

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/348

chose Muhammad ibn Maslamah whom 'Umar used to entrust with checking on his governors and the provinces they were ruling; Usaamah ibn Zayd, the beloved of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and the son of his beloved, the commander of the army which the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had insisted should carry on its mission at the end of his life, saying, Let the mission of Usaamah go ahead; 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir, the great *mujaahid* who had come to Islam early on; and 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar, the pious *faqeeh*. He sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah to Kufah, Usaamah to Basra, 'Ammaar to Egypt and Ibn 'Umar to Syria, and each of them took a group of people with him. He sent them to those major provinces, and each of them went about their difficult, exhausting and dangerous work. Then they all came back, except 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir, who stayed longer in Egypt, then he returned. They presented their findings to the caliph, telling him what they had seen and heard and asked the people about.[1] What they reported was the same for all provinces. They said: O people, we have not seen anything reprehensible and the Muslims did not complain about anything. All that we found is that the governors have been fair to them and are taking care of them.[2] As for that which was narrated about 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir inciting the people against 'Uthmân, the isnaads of these reports are *da'eef* (weak) and are not free of faults, and their texts are also weird.[3]

The inspectors came back from the provinces, and it became clear that there was no reason for the caliph to dismiss any governor; the people were fine, being treated justly and living in an atmosphere of goodness, compassion and tranquillity. The caliph himself was being just, sharing out wealth fairly and paying heed to the dues of Allâh and the dues of the people. The rumours were no more than speculation and lies that were fabricated by those who bore grudges in dark corners so that no one would know their source. But the great, righteous, rightly-

---

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan, al-Khaleefah al-Shaakir al-Saabir,* p. 120

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/348

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/117

guided caliph did not stop there; rather he wrote to the people of the provinces.[1]

He wrote a letter to all the provinces that was a general announcement to all Muslims

I check on my governors and workers every time I meet them during *Hajj*. Since I was appointed caliph, the ummah has been encouraged to enjoin that which is good and forbid that which is evil. No complaint is made about me or any of my workers but I will deal with it, and my family and I have no rights before any of the people but I will give them up to them. The people of Madînah complained to me that there were some people who were insulted and others who were beaten. O you who were beaten in secret and insulted in secret, whoever has any claim of that nature, let him come to *Hajj* and take his rights wherever they are, from me or from my workers, or else give charity (i.e., forgive) and Allâh will reward those who give charity.

When this letter was read out in the provinces, the people wept and prayed for 'Uthmân, and said: This ummah is headed for trouble.[2]

Does anyone in the whole world want to hear someone with more resolve and determination than this resolve and determination of a man who had passed the age of eighty-two, yet he still had the energy and strength to follow up and check on allegations of mistreatment? Could the people find any justice more sublime than his fairness and justice, in which the caliph gave up his own personal rights so long as the rights of Allâh were preserved and His sacred limits were not transgressed? Indeed, 'Uthmân did not stop there. He did not only send trustworthy people to check on the people's situation and write to the people of the provinces telling them to come to *Hajj* to present their complaints - if they had any - before all the pilgrims. That was not enough; rather he sent word to the governors of the

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 1/349

[2] ibid.

provinces themselves, telling them to meet the people when they brought their complaints - if there were any - then let them ask the caliph about what the people were talking about, and offer him sound and sincere advice.[1]

'Uthmân's advice to the governors of the provinces

'Uthmân (ﷺ) sent for the governors of the provinces, summoning them to come at once: 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir, Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd, and he included with them in the consultation Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and 'Amr ibn al-'Aas - who were both former governors. It was a closed, serious meeting in which the following issues were discussed and in which a new plan was developed in light of the news that had reached Madînah, the capital of the Islamic state.[2] 'Uthmân said: Woe to you, what are these complaints? What are these rumours? By Allâh, I am afraid that they may be true about you and it is my responsibility to deal with it. They said to him: Didn't you send people to find out? Didn't they come back with news of what is really going on? Didn't they come back and say that no one had complained to them about anything? By Allâh, the rumours are not true and they are suspicious. We do not know of any basis for what is happening and you cannot hold anyone responsible on this basis. It is no more than rumours that it is not permissible to believe or accept. He said: Advise me. Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas said: This is a plot that is being drawn up in secret; rumours are being fabricated and transmitted to the people with no knowledge, then they take them and talk about them in their gatherings. He said: What is the remedy for that? He said: Look for these people and kill those who are behind these fabrications.

'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd said: Take from the people what they owe when you give them what is due to them, for that is better than leaving them like that. Mu'âwiyah said: You appointed me as a governor over people and you have not heard anything but

[1] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan, al-Khaleefah al-Shaakir al-Saabir,* p. 212

[2] *Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân,* p. 126

good from them, and these two men know best about their provinces. He said: What do you think, O 'Amr? He said: I think that you have been too gentle with them and too kind, you have been more generous with them than 'Umar was. I think that you should follow the way of your companion ('Umar) and be strict when strictness is appropriate and be gentle when gentleness is appropriate. Strictness should be employed with one who wants to do harm to people and gentleness should be employed with one who is sincere towards people, but you have been persistently gentle. 'Uthmân stood up and praised Allâh, then he said: I understand all the advice that you have given me. There is a time for everything. What we fear may befall the ummah is inevitable and the barrier that is keeping it from happening must be reinforced by kind and gentle means, except when it has to do with the sacred limits of Allâh, in which there is no room for compromise. If anything can close this door to turmoil, it is kindness, but by Allâh it will inevitably open. No one has any reason to blame me when Allâh knows that I have done my best for the people, but the wheels of turmoil will turn. Glad tidings for 'Uthmân if he dies without having set them in motion. Calm the people down and give them their dues and pardon them, but if the sacred limits of Allâh are transgressed do not compromise.[1]

'Uthmân (ﷺ) disagreed with his brother 'Amr's view that strictness should be employed, but he did not disagree with the idea of following his two predecessors. The wheels of turmoil were already turning but it could not be dealt with by means of violence, because violence is what usually fuels it. He did not want to be the one to start it ("Glad tidings for 'Uthmân if he dies without having set them in motion.") But he was very clear that the area in which there could be no compromise was the sacred limits of Allâh. There could be no compromise in that case, but in other areas kindness and forgiveness were better, and it was essential to respect the rights of all.[2]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/351

[2] *'Amr ibn al-'Aas - al-Ameer al-Mujaahid,* by al-Ghadbaan, p. 447

There are reports with some weakness and unknown narrators in their isnaads which misrepresent the relationship between 'Amr ibn al-'Aas and 'Uthmân (ﷺ). These worthless reports contributed to the distortion of the image of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (ﷺ) and change his relationship with 'Uthmân (ﷺ) into that of a murderer who planned to kill his leader and then, in a spirit of opportunism, demand *qisaas*.[1] This report is weak and was rejected by the historians and scholars of *hadeeth*.[2] There is another report whose isnaad also contains weak and unknown narrators which says that 'Amr ibn al-'Aas said: O 'Uthmân, you have controlled the people by appointing Banu Umayyah. You said and they said; you drifted away and they drifted away. Sort yourself out or else resign; decide what you want to do and go ahead with it.[3] In the same report it says that 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Aamir said: I think that you should send them away from their wives on these campaigns so that the only concern of any of them will be dealing with the lice on his head and taking care of his mount, and that will distract them from causing you trouble.[4]

'Uthmân (ﷺ) prevented the governors from punishing these troublemakers by imprisoning or executing them, and he decided to treat them with kindness and gentleness.[5] He asked his governors to return to their work in accordance with the way that he announced of dealing with the turmoil which everyone with insight realized was inevitable.[6]

Two suggestions from Mu'âwiyah that were rejected by 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

Before Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân headed back to Syria, he went to 'Uthmân and said to him: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, come

[1] op. cit., p. 448

[2] ibid.

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/340

[4] ibid.

[5] *Khilaafat 'Uthmân*, by Dr. al-Sulami, p. 77

[6] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 151

with me to Syria before the situation gets worse and you will not be able to handle it.

'Uthmân said: I will not trade being close to the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) *for anything, even if it leads to the cutting of my neck.* Mu'âwiyah said to him: Then I will send an army to you from Syria, to stay in Madînah and confront the expected dangers and protect you and the people of Madînah. 'Uthmân said: I do not want to reduce the provision of the neighbours of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) with these soldiers coming to live amongst them, and I do not want conditions to become crowded for the *Muhâjirîn* and *Ansâr*. Mu'âwiyah said to him: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you will be assassinated or an army will come and invade Madînah. 'Uthmân said: Allâh is sufficient for me and He is the best disposer of affairs.[1]

It is as if 'Uthmân knew that behind all the turmoil and rumours there were evil people who were planning to achieve a terrible goal, which was no less than toppling the caliph and undermining the caliphate. But the rightly-guided caliph 'Uthmân had a different opinion, because he wanted to go along with these people all the way, so that he could leave them with no excuse before Allâh or before the people, thus exposing them in this world and in the Hereafter. This was a patient way of dealing with the situation on the part of the great and just ruler.[2]

'Uthmân's spies penetrate the ranks of the conspirators after they come to Madînah

The caliph 'Uthmân had sufficient alertness to ensure that his spies penetrated the ranks of conspirators, by sending two men who had been disciplined and punished so that the conspirators would feel at ease with them. 'Uthmân sent two men, a Makhzoomi and a Zuhri, and said: Go and find out what they are up to, and bring me news of them. The punishment they received from 'Uthmân was aimed at disciplining them, so they

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/353

[2] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan - al-Khaleefah al-Shaakir al-Saabir,* p. 214

had borne it with patience and did not bear any grudges. When the conspirators saw them they told them what their aims were. They said: Who is with you in this aim among the people of Madînah? They said: Three men. They said: Is that all? They said: No. They said: What do you want to do? They explained to the two men the full extent of the conspiracy and the plans that had been drawn up. They said: We want to confront him with the things that we have told the people about, then we will go back to the people and tell them that he admitted it, but he did not want to give it up or repent. Then we will come back again as if we are going for *Hajj*, but we will come to Madînah and besiege him and depose him; if he resists we will kill him and let it be. The two men went back to 'Uthmân and he smiled and said: O Allâh, guide these people for if You do not guide them, they will be doomed. He sent word to the people of Kufah and Basra and the call went out: *As-salaatu jaami'ah* (prayer is about to begin), and they were with him at the base of the *minbar*. The companions of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) came and surrounded them, and he praised and glorified Allâh and told them what these people were up to, and that they were seeking to promote the lies about him in order to pave the way for rebellion and then depose or kill him. The two men who had spoken to the Saba'is stood up and bore witness to what they had told them. The Muslims inside the mosque all said: Kill them, O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for they want to rebel against the caliph and divide the Muslims. But 'Uthmân refused the call of the *Sahâbah* to kill them, because they were outwardly Muslims who were under his care, and he did not want it to be said that 'Uthmân killed the Muslims who disagreed with him. Hence 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân rejected that call saying: We will not kill them, rather we will forgive them and pardon them, and we will try to show them the right way as much as we can. We will not kill any of the Muslims unless he commits an offence which is subject to the *hadd* punishment of execution or he shows himself to be an apostate or *kaafir*.[1]

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/345, 355

Establishing proof against the rebels

Then 'Uthmân called on the Saba'is to explain what they were confused about and to make a list of the mistakes and transgressions that they thought 'Uthmân had committed, in a meeting in the mosque in which things were to be discussed frankly in front of the *Sahâbah* and the Muslims. So the Saba'is spoke and explained the mistakes that 'Uthmân had made - according to their allegations - and 'Uthmân explained, eloquently and clearly, his position and the basis for his actions. The Muslims who were fair-minded listened to this frank discussion and transparent accounting. 'Uthmân mentioned the alleged grievances, explained how things really were, and defended his good conduct, and asked the *Sahâbah* who were sitting in the mosque to testify to that.[1]

1- He said: They say that I offer the prayer in full when I travel, and that the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and 'Umar did not do that before me. But I offered the prayer in full when I travelled from Madînah to Makkah, and Makkah is a town in which I have a family, so I am staying with my family and I am not a traveller, is that not so? The *Sahâbah* said: By Allâh, yes.

2- They said that I have allocated grazing land for myself, and caused hardship for the Muslims, and set aside a vast area of land for my camels. Before my time, grazing land was allocated for the camels that were given in zakaah and used in *jihad*, and the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and 'Umar all allocated land for grazing. I had to add to it because the number of camels given in zakaah and used in *jihad* increased. Moreover, I did not prevent the livestock of the poor Muslims from grazing on that land. I never allocated it for my own livestock.

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 154, 155

When I was appointed caliph, I was one of the richest of the Muslims in camels and sheep, but I have spent it all and I have no livestock at all now except two camels which I keep for *Hajj*. Is that not so? The *Sahâbah* said: By Allâh, yes.

3- They say that I kept only one copy of the *Mush-hafs* and burned all the rest, and I united the people in reading one *Mus-haf.* But the Qur'ân is indeed the word of Allâh, which came from Allâh, and it is all one, and all I did was to unite the Muslims behind the Qur'ân, and forbid them to differ concerning it. By doing that I followed in the footsteps of Abu Bakr, who compiled the Qur'ân. Is that not so? The *Sahâbah* said; By Allâh, yes.

4- They said that I allowed al-Hakam ibn al-'Aas to return to Madînah when the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had banished him to al-Taa'if. Al-Hakam ibn al-'Aas is a Makkan, not a Madeenan, and the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) exiled him from Makkah to al-Taa'if, and the Messenger (ﷺ) let him return to Makkah after he was pleased with him. The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) sent him to al-Taa'if and he is the one who let him come back to Makkah. Is that not so? The *Sahâbah* said: By Allâh, yes.

5- They said that I employed young people and appointed youngsters as governors, but I have never appointed anyone but a man who was just and kind and of good character. These are the people over whom they were appointed - go and ask them about them. Those who came before me appointed some who were even younger than these. The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) appointed Usaamah ibn Zayd when he was younger than those whom I appointed, and they spoke more harshly to the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) than they spoke to me. Is that not so? The *Sahâbah* said: By Allâh, yes, these people

criticize others but they do not understand what is happening.

6- They said that I gave to 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi'l-Sarh what Allâh had granted of booty, but I only gave him one-fifth of the *khums* - which was one hundred thousand - when he conquered North Africa, as a reward for his efforts. I said to him: If Allâh enables you to conquer North Africa, you will have one-fifth of the *khums* as a reward. Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them both) did that before me, yet despite that the *mujaahideen* troops said to me: We object to you giving one-fifth of the *khums*, although they had no right to object. But I took the one-fifth of the *khums* from Ibn Sa'd and gave it to the troops, so in fact Ibn Sa'd did not take anything. Is that not so? The *Sahâbah* said: By Allâh, yes.

7- They said that I love my family and am generous to them. As for my love for my family, that did not make me biased towards them or make me support them in cases of injustice or mistreatment of others. Rather they have duties like everyone else and I take their dues from them. As for giving to them, I gave to them from my own wealth, not from the wealth of the Muslims, because I do not regard the wealth of the Muslims as permissible for me, and no one has the right (to take the wealth of the Muslims). I used to give generously from my own wealth at the time of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allâh be pleased with them both). At that time I was very careful in spending. But now I am the oldest of my family and am approaching the end of my life, and I have given my wealth to my family and relatives. Let the evildoers say what they say. By Allâh, I did not take any wealth or surplus from any Muslim province. I let those provinces

keep their wealth and I did not bring anything to Madînah except the *khums* (one-fifth) of the war booty. The Muslims took care of dividing the other four-fifths and gave it to those who were entitled to it. By Allâh, I did not take even a penny or anything else from that booty. I only eat from my own wealth and I only give to my family from my own wealth.

8- They said that I gave the conquered land to certain men, and that the *Muhâjirîn* and *Ansâr*, and other *mujaahideen*, took part in conquering these lands. When I divided these lands among the conquerors, some of them settled there, and some came back to their families in Madînah or elsewhere, but that land remained in their possession, and some sold the land and kept its price with them.

Thus 'Uthmân answered the main objections that had been raised against him; he clarified his position and highlighted the true facts.[1] From this strong defence presented by 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (ﷺ), which he discussed with the *Sahâbah*, we get an idea of the harsh criticism that was directed against him and the foul rumours and fabricated falsehoods that the Saba'is spread about him. 'Uthmân (ﷺ) summed up the objections that they had against him and highlighted the facts about his actions. He explained that he knew what he was doing and that he had a clear, *shar'i* basis for all his actions. But they had ulterior motives and were not interested in seeking guidance or setting things straight. His approach in this debate was that of a sincere man to one who is watching him and looking for his faults, aiming to achieve his goals of stirring up people against him. Such a one cannot be convinced by any proof or guided by any evidence, and whomsoever Allâh leaves astray, no one can guide.[2]

---

[1] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, p. 61-111; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/355, 356; *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 158; *al-Fitnah* by Ahmad 'Armoosh, p. 10-14.

[2] *Tareekh al-Jadal* by Muhammad Abu Zahrah, p. 98, 99

The leaders of the troublemakers who were beside the *minbar* heard his explanations, as did the noble *Sahâbah* and the Muslims and righteous men who were with them. The Muslims were moved by 'Uthmân's words and believed what he said, and it increased their love for him. As for the Saba'is who were promoting turmoil and division, they were not moved at all, and they did not retract their views, because they were not looking for truth or seeking the good, rather their aim was to create trouble and plot against Islam and the Muslims. The *Sahâbah* and Muslims suggested to 'Uthmân that he execute those Saba'is and leading troublemakers because of their lies, fabrications and hatred that had become apparent; rather they insisted that he should kill them and rid the Muslims of their evil and bring stability by putting an end to the turmoil that had been stirred up by them and their followers. But 'Uthmân had a different opinion; he preferred to leave them alone and he thought that they should not be killed, in an attempt to delay the onset of turmoil. So 'Uthmân did not take any steps against the Saba'is who had come from Egypt, Kufah and Basra, even though he knew what they were plotting, and he let them leave Madînah and go back to their own lands.[1]

Responding to some of their requests

'Uthmân responded to some of their requests by dismissing some governors and appointing those they asked for. These steps could have been sufficient to deal with the situation and ensure truth and justice, if the situation had been normal. But the fact of the matter is that there were hidden aims and *jaahili* hatred behind these complaints and provocations, and there was an effort to provoke turmoil and disunity among the Muslims, and the fulfilling of what the Prophet (ﷺ) had foretold about the martyrdom of 'Uthmân (ﷺ).[2]

---

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashidoon* by al-Khaalidi, p. 158, 159

[2] *Khilaafat 'Uthmân* by al-Sulami, p. 78

'Uthmân's guidelines for dealing with turmoil

Anyone who studies the way in which 'Uthmân dealt with the turmoil that occurred during his reign may discern some of the guidelines that will help the Muslim to confront turmoil. These guidelines include the following:

Verification.

'Uthmân sent inspection committees to the regions to listen to the people and he managed to penetrate the Saba'i group and find out what they were really up to, and he did not hasten to pass judgement.

Adhering to justice and fairness

This guideline was manifested in the letter that he sent to the regions, in which he asked anyone who claimed to have been insulted or beaten by the governors to come to *Hajj* and settle his score with the caliph or any of the governors.[1]

Forbearance and deliberation.

This guideline is manifested in his letter to the people of Kufah, when they asked him to dismiss Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas and appoint Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. In this letter it says: "By Allâh, I shall do my utmost and I shall be very patient with you, and I shall do what is in your best interests as much as I can. Ask me for everything that you want, so long as it does not involve any disobedience towards Allâh, and I will grant you it. Tell me about all that you dislike so long as it does not involve any disobedience towards Allâh, and I will let you off."[2]

Keenness for that which unites people and shunning that which causes division among the Muslims

Hence 'Uthmân united the people on one *Mus-haf* as we have seen. When al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i gave him three options - which

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/349

[2] op. cit., 5/343

we will discuss in detail below, *in sha Allâh* - 'Uthmân said: If you kill me, I have not done anything that deserves killing. By Allâh, if you kill me you will never love one another after I am gone, and you will never pray together after I am gone, and you will never fight the enemy together after I am gone.[1]

Keeping quiet and not speaking too much

From the biography of 'Uthmân it is clear that he was someone who did not speak too much unless it included beneficial knowledge, advice, or refutation of false accusations. He was very quiet and spoke little.

Consulting knowledgeable people

'Uthmân (ﷺ) consulted the scholars among the *Sahâbah*, such as 'Ali, Talhah, az-Zubayr, Muhammad ibn Maslamah, Ibn 'Aamir and 'Abd-Allâh ibn Salaam (ﷺ). The scholars are the key to security and a refuge at times of calamity and tribulation, because they have the most insight into turmoil and know where it is heading. The one who turns to them will find sound understanding, the correct view and the proper Islamic attitude.[2]

Seeking guidance from the *ahaadeeth* of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) concerning turmoil

'Uthmân's method during the turmoil and in dealing with the rebels was not dictated by the unfolding of events or the pressures of reality, rather it was based on the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ), as the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had instructed him to be patient and seek reward, and not to fight back, until Allâh decreed what He willed. 'Uthmân (ﷺ) fulfilled his promise to the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) throughout his caliphate, until he fell as a martyr stained with his own pure blood.[3]

Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb said: What is indicated by a

---

[1] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 7/184

[2] *Ahdaath wa Ahaadeeth Fitnat al-Harj,* p. 728

[3] *Istishhaad 'Uthmân wa Waq'at al-Jamal,* p. 116

number of reports about 'Uthmân's attitude about defending himself or surrendering to the decree of Allâh is that he hated turmoil and feared Allâh with regard to shedding Muslim blood, but in the end he wished that he had enough power to scare the transgressors so that they would be deterred from their deeds with no need to use weapons in order to reach this outcome. Before matters got out of hand, Mu'âwiyah offered to send troops from Syria to him, to be under his command, but he refused lest that cause hardship to the people of Madînah due to the soldiers being stationed among them. He did not think that audacity would reach such a level that his Muslim brothers would shed the blood of the first *Muhaajir* who had migrated for the sake of Allâh and His religion. Even when the evildoers besieged him and surrounded him, he realized that defending himself would lead to futile bloodshed, so he urged everyone who was supposed to hear and obey to refrain from fighting or engaging in any violence. The reports about his attitude are abundant in the sources of both those who loved him and of those who hated him. But if there had been an organized force available that had the power to withstand this rebellion and put limits on this arrogance and tribalism, then 'Uthmân would have been content and at ease with that, and he would have still been reassured that he would not die but as a martyr.[1]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim,* p. 138

The rebels' occupation of Madînah

Arrival of the rebels from the regions

The rebels agreed among themselves to carry out the final stage of their plot to attack 'Uthmân in Madînah and force him to give up the caliphate or be killed. They decided to come from their three centres: Egypt, Kufah and Basra, at the time of *Hajj*, leaving their lands with the pilgrims; they would present themselves as pilgrims and tell others that they were going for *Hajj*. When they reached Madînah, they let the pilgrims go on to Makkah to perform the *Hajj* rituals, and they took advantage of the fact that most of the people of Madînah had also left for *Hajj*, and they besieged 'Uthmân with the aim of deposing him or killing him.[1] In Shawwaal of 35 AH, the rebels were on the outskirts of Madînah.[2]

The rebels from Egypt came in four groups, each of which had a leader, and these four leaders in turn had a leader. They had with them their devil 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' and the leaders of the four groups, whose names were: 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn 'Udays al-Balawi, Kinaanah ibn Basheer al-Tujaybi, Sawdaan ibn Hamraan

---

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 159

[2] op. cit., p. 159

al-Sukooni and Qateerah ibn Fulaan as-Sukooni. Their commander-in-chief was al-Ghaafiqi ibn Harb al-'Aqqi. The four groups totalled one thousand men in all.

The rebels from Kufah also numbered one thousand men in four groups. The leaders of their groups were: Zayd ibn Sawhaan al-'Abdi, al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i, Ziyaad ibn al-Nadar al-Haarithi and 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Asamm. The leader of the Kufan rebels was 'Amr ibn al-Asamm.

The rebels from Basra also numbered one thousand men in four groups. The leaders of their groups were: Hakeem ibn Jabalah al-'Abdi, Dhuray' ibn 'Abbaad, Bishr ibn Shurayh al-Qaysi and Ibn al-Muharrish ibn 'Abd al-Hanqi. The leader of the Basran rebels was Harqoos ibn Zuhayr al-Sa'di.

'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' travelled with these people, feeling happy and proud at the success of his devilish plan. The rebels from Egypt wanted 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib as caliph, the rebels from Kufah wanted az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam as caliph, and the rebels from Basra wanted Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh as caliph.[1] The reason for that was to create division among the *Sahâbah* (may Allâh be pleased with them). This is what al-Aajurri suggested when he said: Allâh (may He be glorified and exalted) saved 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ), Talhah and az-Zubayr from getting involved with these groups, who only claimed to support them in order to confuse the people and create trouble among the *Sahâbah,* but Allâh protected the *Sahâbah* from that.[2]

News of their approach reached 'Uthmân before they arrived, when he was in a village outside Madînah. When they heard that he was there, they went there and he received them there. The reports do not tell us the name of this village, but al-Madaa'ini put the date of their arrival as a Wednesday night at the beginning of Dhu'l-Qa'dah.[3] The first to arrive were the Egyptians, who said

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/357

[2] *Istishhaad 'Uthmân wa Waq'at al-Jamal* by Khaalid il-Ghayth, p. 148

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân* by Dr. Muhammad al-Ghadbaan, 1/127

to 'Uthmân: Call for the *Mus-haf*. So he called for it and they said: Open the seventh soorah - which was what they called Soorat Yoonus. He read until he reached this verse:

﴿قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُم مِّن رِّزْقٍ فَجَعَلْتُم مِّنْهُ حَرَامًا وَحَلَٰلًا قُلْ ءَآللَّهُ أَذِنَ لَكُمْ أَمْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ﴾

"Say [O Muhammad (ﷺ) to these polytheists] : 'Tell me, what provision Allâh has sent down to you! And you have made of it lawful and unlawful.' Say [O Muhammad (ﷺ)] : 'Has Allâh permitted you (to do so), or do you invent a lie against Allâh?'" (Yoonus 10:59).

They said to him: Stop. What do you think about the land that you set aside for grazing? Has Allâh permitted you (to do that), or do you invent a lie against Allâh? He said: I will tell you. This verse was revealed concerning such and such. As for the grazing land, 'Umar allocated it before me for the zakaah camels. When I became caliph, the number of zakaah camels increased so I added to the grazing land because of this increase in the numbers of zakaah camels. What else? They started quoting verse after verse, and he kept saying: It was revealed concerning such and such. Then they did not say any more, and they made a deal with him. They stipulated conditions for him and he stipulated the condition that they should not rebel or split from the main body of Muslims so long as he fulfilled their conditions. Then they went away content.[1]

- 'Uthmân sent 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib to negotiate with the rebels from the provinces

The people stayed in Dhu'l-Marwah for about a month and a half before his murder. 'Uthmân sent 'Ali (ﷺ), and another man who is not named in the sources, to meet with them. 'Ali met with them and said to them: If I quote to you from the Book of Allâh, will you accept it and settle all the issues that you are complaining

[1] op. cit., 1/128

about on that basis? They agreed to that.[1] According to one report they argued with him and he argued with them two or three times, then they said: He is the cousin of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and the envoy of the caliph; he is asking you to accept the Book of Allâh (as a reference point), so they agreed to deal with him.[2] They agreed to five things: that the one who was banished could return home, the one who was deprived of a stipend would be given it, the fay' would be shared out, he would be fair in dividing the spoils, and he would employ people of honesty and ability. They wrote that down in a document, and also stipulated that Ibn 'Aamir would be reinstated as governor of Basra and Abu Moosa would remain as governor of Kufah.[3]

Thus 'Uthmân made a deal with each group on its own, then each party set off for its own land.[4]

- Fabricated letter giving orders to kill the Egyptian delegation

After this treaty had been drawn up and the people of the regions started heading for home feeling content with what they had achieved, it became clear to the instigators of turmoil that their plans had failed and their evil goals had not been reached. So they came up with a new plan to revive the turmoil and destroy all the deals that had been made between the people of the regions and 'Uthmân (ﷺ). This plot took the following form: As the Egyptian delegation was travelling homeward, they saw someone riding a camel who repeatedly approached them then moved away, as if he was fleeing from them and saying, come and catch me. So they caught him and said to him: What is the matter with you? He said: I am the envoy of the caliph to his agent in Egypt. They examined him and found a letter that bore 'Uthmân's seal but was a forgery, addressed to his governor. When they opened it, they found that it contained orders to

[1] *Tareekh Dimashq,* biography of 'Uthmân, p. 328; *Tareekh Khaleefah,* p. 169, 170.

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/129

[3] op. cit., 1/129

[4] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/129

crucify them or kill them, or cut off their hands and feet. They went back to Madînah[1] , but 'Uthmân (ﷺ) denied ever writing this letter. He said to them: There are two ways you can prove me guilty; either bring two Muslim men to testify or accept my oath by Allâh, besides Whom there is no other god, that I did not write it or dictate it or have any knowledge of it. A letter may be attributed to a man and a seal may be put on it. But they did not believe him.[2]

This letter which the hateful rebels claimed was from 'Uthmân, bearing his seal and carried by his slave on one of the zakaah camels to his governor in Egypt, Ibn Abi'l-Sarh, ordering him to kill these rebels, was a forged letter that was falsely attributed to 'Uthmân. That is clear for a number of reasons:

1- The carrier of the forged letter approached those Egyptians then ran away, and he did that repeatedly. He only did that to attract their attention and make them suspicious, as if he was saying: I have something important concerning you. If the letter carrier had really come from 'Uthmân he would have been scared of them and would have kept away from them, and he would have hastened to reach the governor of Egypt and hand over the instructions so that he could carry them out.

2- How did the Iraqis know about this matter when they had set out for their own country and were separated from the Egyptians - who intercepted this fabricated letter - by a huge distance? The Iraqis were in the east and the Egyptians were in the west, yet they all came back at the same time, as if they had an appointment. That could not have happened unless those who fabricated the letter and hired someone to carry it and play his role in al-Buwayb with the Egyptians had hired another rider to go and tell the Iraqis that the Egyptians had discovered a letter sent by 'Uthmân with instructions to kill

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/379

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân* (5/132); *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/191

the Egyptian rebels. This is what 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ) thought when he said: O people of Kufah and Basra, how did you know what had happened to the people of Egypt, when you had travelled a long distance, then you came back?[1] In fact 'Ali was certain about that and said: By Allâh, this was a plan that was drawn up in Madînah.[2]

3- How could 'Uthmân have written to Ibn Abi'l-Sarh telling him to kill these rebels, when after the rebels had left Egypt heading for Madînah, Ibn Abi'l-Sarh had written to the caliph asking for permission to come to him, when Muhammad ibn Abi Hudhayfah seized control of Egypt? In fact, Ibn Abi'l-Sarh left Egypt and went to al-'Areesh and Palestine, then to al-'Aqabah, so how could 'Uthmân have written to him, telling him to kill them, when he had received a letter from him asking for permission to come to him?

4- 'Uthmân forbade killing the rebels when they besieged him and refused to let the *Sahâbah* defend him, and he did not give any instruction to fight the rebels in self-defence, as we shall see in detail below *in sha Allâh*, so how could he write something like this fabricated letter when they had left Madînah making a show of repentance?

5- The fact that Hukaym ibn Jablah and al-Ashtar al-Nakha'i stayed behind in Madînah after the rebels had left clearly indicates that they were the ones who fabricated the letter, because they had nothing to do in Madînah and they only stayed there for that purpose. They were the ones who had a stake in the matter.[3] That may have been on the instructions of 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', because 'Uthmân had nothing to gain from that and neither did Marwaan ibn al-Hakam. Those who accuse Marwaan with regard to that are

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/359
[2] ibid.
[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan al-Khaleefah al-Shaakir al-Saabir*, p. 277

in fact accusing the caliph of being negligent in his duties and suggesting that in the caliph's court there were people who were doing things without his knowledge, and thus they attempt to clear those traitors of any blame. Moreover, if Marwaan had forged the letter, he would have advised the carrier to stay away from those rebels and not approach them on the road lest they capture him, otherwise he would be one of the conspirators against 'Uthmân, and that is not possible.

6- This cursed letter was not the first letter fabricated by these rebels, rather they also fabricated letters that were attributed to the Mothers of the Believers, and also 'Ali, Talhah and az-Zubayr. 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) was accused of having written to the people, telling them to rebel against 'Uthmân, but she denied it and said: No, by the One in Whom the believers believe, and in Whom the disbelievers disbelieve, I never wrote anything to them until I sat here where I am.[1]

Al-A'mash commented: They thought that it had been falsely attributed to her.[2] The delegates accused 'Ali of having written to them, telling them to come to Madînah, but he denied that and swore: By Allâh, I did not write any letter to you.[3] Letters to people in other regions, telling them to come to Madînah because the religion of Muhammad had been corrupted and abandoned, and *jihad* in Madînah was better than staying in remote outposts, were also attributed to the *Sahâbah*.[4] Ibn Katheer commented on this report by saying: This is a lie against the *Sahâbah*, and the letters were fabrications against them. Fabricated letters that were attributed to 'Ali, Talhah and az-Zubayr, which they denied, were sent to the rebels - the killers of 'Uthmân. This letter was also

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/334

[2] *Tareekh Kahleefah ibn al-Khayyaat*, p. 169

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/335

[4] ibid.

falsely attributed to 'Uthmân; he did not tell anyone to write it for him and he was not aware of it.[1] The words of Ibn Katheer are confirmed by the report of al-Tabari, as quoted by Khaleefah, which says that the senior *Sahâbah* themselves - 'Ali, 'Aa'ishah and az-Zubayr - denied these letters, according to the most sound reports.[2] The criminals who fabricated these letters and attributed them falsely to the *Sahâbah* are the same ones who fanned the flames of turmoil from beginning to end and stirred up all that far-reaching corruption. They are the ones who fabricated and propagated all these lies against 'Uthmân and tried to spread them among the people, until the hooligans began to accept them. Then they forged that letter which they attributed to 'Uthmân, so that 'Uthmân would end up as a victim and thus become a blessed martyr. But the martyr 'Uthmân was not the only victim of this Saba'i conspiracy, rather Islam itself was a victim before that, and the many generations who learned that distorted history were also victims of this evil Jew and his helpers who were motivated by greed, whims and desires, and grudges. Is it not time for the Muslims to learn the truth about their history and its great men? Rather, is it not time for contemporary Muslim writers to fear Allâh and not have the audacity to criticize the innocent before examining the reports and investigating thoroughly, so that they do not fall into the same trap as others?[3]

The beginning of the siege, and 'Uthmân's opinion on praying behind the leaders of the troublemakers

The sound reports do not describe in detail how the siege began, but perhaps the events that preceded it shed some light on how it began. Whilst 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was addressing the people one day, a man called A'yun[4] suddenly interrupted him, saying: O

[1] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/175

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/335

[3] *'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan - al-Khaleefah al-Shaakir al-Saabir*, p. 228, 229

[4] A'yun ibn Daba'iyah ibn Naajiyah ibn Ghaffaal al-Tameemi al-Hanzali al-Dharami.

Na'thil[1] , you have changed. 'Uthmân (ﷺ) said: Who is this? They said: A'yun. 'Uthmân said: Rather you have changed, O slave. The people leapt on A'yun and a man from Banu Layth started trying to push them away from him until he let him in his house.[2] Then the rebels came back again, and before the siege got worse, 'Uthmân was able to go out to pray, and admit whoever he wanted to his house. Then he was prevented from leaving the house, even for the obligatory prayers.[3] One of the leading rebels who were besieging 'Uthmân led the prayers, until 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Adiyy ibn al-Khayyaar felt uneasy about praying behind him, so he consulted 'Uthmân about that, and 'Uthmân told him to pray behind him. He said to him: Prayer is the best deed that the people do, so if the people are doing good, then join them, and if they do bad then stay away from them.[4] According to some weak reports, the one who was leading the people in prayer was their leader al-Ghaafiqi.[5] The report narrated by al-Waaqidi, which says that 'Ali told Abu Ayyoob al-Ansâri to lead the people in prayer, and he led them in prayer at the beginning of the siege, then 'Ali led them in prayer on *Eid* and after that, is not sound.[6] In addition to the fact that the *isnaad* of this report is weak, if 'Ali or Abu Ayyoob had been the one who was leading the prayers, 'Ubayd-Allâh ibn 'Adiyy ibn al-Khayyaar would not have felt uneasy about praying behind them.[7]

Negotiations between 'Uthmân and the besiegers

After the siege was complete and the rebels had surrounded

---

[1] An insulting nickname given by the rebels to 'Uthmân.

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/143; *Tareekh Dimashq Tarjamat 'Uthmân*, p. 247 - its *isnâd* is hasan.

[3] *Tareekh Dimashq Tarjamat 'Uthmân*, p. 341, 342 - its *isnâd* is hasan.

[4] Al-Bukhaari, *Kitaab al-Salaah*, no. 192

[5] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/145

[6] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/444 (al-Waaqidi himself is known to report fabricated narrations). (Translator)

[7] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/145

'Uthmân in the house, they asked him to give up the caliphate, or they would kill him.[1] But 'Uthmân (ﷺ) refused to give it up, and said: I will never take off the garment that Allâh has given me to wear[2] , referring to the advice that the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had given him. However, a few of the *Sahâbah* had a different opinion and some of them, including al-Mugheerah ibn al-Akhnas (ﷺ), suggested to him that he should give up the caliphate to save his life, but he refused to do that.[3]

1. Ibn 'Umar urges 'Uthmân not to give up the position of caliph

Ibn 'Umar entered upon 'Uthmân (may Allâh be pleased with them both) during the siege and said to him: Look at what these people are saying. They are saying: Give it up and do not kill yourself. Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) said: If you give it up, are you going to live forever in this world? 'Uthmân (ﷺ) said: No. He said: If you do not give it up, can they do any more than kill you? 'Uthmân said: No. He said: Are they the ones to decide whether you go to Paradise or to Hell? He said: No. He said: I do not think that you should take off a garment that Allâh had given you to wear, otherwise that will become a precedent and every time a people dislikes their caliph or ruler they will kill him.[4]

May Allâh be pleased with 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar - how far-sighted he was. He did not want 'Uthmân to set a bad precedent for the caliphs who came after him, and 'Uthmân is far above doing such a thing. If 'Uthmân gave in to these Saba'i rebels and gave up the caliphate, the caliphate would have become a plaything in the hands of evildoers and those with ulterior motives, and thus the position of caliph would become unstable and have no respect among the people. But 'Uthmân set a good precedent for those who came after him by consulting Ibn 'Umar

---

[1] *at-Tabaqaat* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/66; *Tareekh Khaleefah*, p. 171

[2] *at-Tamheed*, p. 46, 47

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/147

[4] *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah*, 1/473. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

and other *Sahâbah* (ﷺ), and he bore it with patience, seeking reward (with Allâh); he did not give up the caliphate or cause the blood of Muslims to be shed.[1]

If he had responded to the demands of the rebels, who were a small group among the ummah and not among the decision-makers, prominent figures or leading scholars, that would have had serious consequences for the ummah, the position of the caliph and the relationship between the rulers and the people. The price he paid for averting these negative consequences was his life; he was certain of his fate but he surrendered to it even though that is something that was disliked, but he gave precedence to the best interests of the ummah over his own personal interests, which demonstrates his strength, resolve and courage, and refutes the accusation made against him, that he was weak of character. 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was able, by Allâh's leave, to rein in the turmoil, but he thought that it would lead to evil consequences that outweighed the interests achieved by resisting it. So he decided not to resist it so as to avoid negative consequences. Thus it is clear that al-'Aqqaad was mistaken when he said that the murder of 'Uthmân can only be described as troublemaking on the part of some thugs with no one who could contain it[2] , because that implies some criticism of the character and courage of 'Uthmân (ﷺ). It was indeed turmoil caused by thugs, but not resisting it is something for which 'Uthmân (ﷺ) is to be praised, because that was a sacrifice he made for the sake of Allâh, hoping to do that which was in the best interests of the ummah and acting on the advice of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ).[3]

2. The besiegers threaten to kill him

Whilst 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was in his house, and the people were outside the house besieging him, 'Uthmân went to the entrance of the house one day and heard the besiegers threatening to kill him.

---

[1] *Al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 179

[2] *Dhu'n-Noorayn 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan,* p. 122

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/149

He went away from the entrance and entered upon those who were with him in the house, his face drained of colour. He said: They were threatening to kill me just now. They said to him: Allâh will suffice you, O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. He said: Why would they kill me, when I heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) say:

«لَا يَحِلُّ دَمُ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ إِلَّا فِي إِحْدَى ثَلَاثٍ: رَجُلٍ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِ، أَوْ زَنَى بَعْدَ إِحْصَانِهِ، أَوْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ»

"It is not permissible to shed the blood of a Muslim except in three cases : a man who disbelieved after having believed, or who committed zina after having been married, or who killed a soul unlawfully."

By Allâh, I never committed zina during the Jaahiliyyah or in Islam, and I never wished to change my religion after Allâh guided me, and I never killed anyone, so why would they kill me?[1] Then he looked out over the people who were besieging him and tried to calm them down and stop their rebellion against their leader by refuting the criticisms they made against him and explaining the things that had been distorted, in the hope that they would come to their senses. He asked the besiegers to send him a man to speak to him, and they sent a young man called Sa'sa'ah ibn Sawhaan, and 'Uthmân asked him to explain to him what they were angry about.[2]

3. 'Uthmân established proof against Sa'sa'ah's misquotation of Qur'ân

Sa'sa'ah said: We were expelled from our homes unjustly only because we said, Our Lord is Allâh (cf. al-*Hajj* 22:40). 'Uthmân (ﷺ) said to him: Quote the Qur'ân. So he recited:

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا۟ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ﴾

---

[1] *al-Musnad*, 1/63. Ahmad Shaakir (452) said: Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/150

"Permission to fight (against disbelievers). is given to those (believers) who are fought against, because they have been wronged; and surely, Allâh is Able to give them (believers) victory" (*Al-Hajj* 22:39).

'Uthmân said: This does not apply to you and your companions; rather it applies to me and my companions. Then 'Uthmân recited the verse that Sa'sa'ah had quoted as evidence and that which comes after it, which showed that Sa'sa'ah was misquoting it. He recited:

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمۡ ظُلِمُواْۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصۡرِهِمۡ لَقَدِيرٌ ۝ ٱلَّذِينَ
أُخۡرِجُواْ مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بِغَيۡرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُواْ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُۗ وَلَوۡلَا دَفۡعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ
بَعۡضَهُم بِبَعۡضٖ لَّهُدِّمَتۡ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٞ وَصَلَوَٰتٞ وَمَسَٰجِدُ يُذۡكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسۡمُ ٱللَّهِ
كَثِيرٗاۗ وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ۝ ٱلَّذِينَ إِن
مَّكَّنَّٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَمَرُواْ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَنَهَوۡاْ
عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡأُمُورِ﴾

"Permission to fight (against disbelievers) is given to those (believers) who are fought against, because they have been wronged; and surely, Allâh is Able to give them (believers) victory Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: "Our Lord is Allâh." For had it not been that Allâh checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allâh is mentioned much would surely, have been pulled down. Verily, Allâh will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allâh is All-Strong, All-Mighty. Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) enjoin Iqaamat-as-Salaah [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational Salaah (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the Zakaah and they enjoin Al-Ma'roof (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam

has forbidden) [i.e. they make the Qur'ân as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allâh rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures)." (*Al-Hajj* 22:39-41)

'Uthmân (ﷺ) explained to the people the correct meaning of these verses as they were revealed, the reason why they were revealed and concerning whom they were revealed, and what they meant, so that the people would not be confused by one who read the Qur'ân to them but did not know what it meant and used it as evidence for the opposite of what it meant.[1] Moreover, when 'Uthmân banished those whom he banished, he did so in accordance with the verse which follows the verse that was misquoted by Sa'sa'ah, which instructs those to whom Allâh gives power in the land to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil; 'Uthmân was the caliph and he banished them by way of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, because of what they did of transgressing against some of the Muslims and their attempts to stir up *fitnah*.[2]

4. 'Uthmân reminds the people of his virtues

After refuting these people, 'Uthmân reminded the people of his status and of some of his virtues, urging those who knew of them or had heard them from the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) to testify to the people. He said: I adjure by Allâh whoever heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) on the mountain of Hira', when the mountain shook and he kicked it with his foot and said:

«اسْكُنْ حِرَاءُ، لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ أَوْصِدِّيقٌ أَوْشَهِيدٌ»

"Calm down, Hira', for there is no one on you but a Prophet or a Siddeeq or a martyr,"

and I was with him. Some men testified to that, then he said: I adjure by Allâh whoever heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) on the day of the oath of allegiance of al-Radwaan, when he had sent me

[1] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/151
[2] op. cit., 1/152

to the *mushrikeen*, to the people of Makkah, and he said:

«هَذِهِ يَدِي وَهَذِهِ يَدُ عُثْمَانَ»

"This is my hand and this is the hand of 'Uthmân,"

and he swore allegiance on my behalf. Some men testified to that, then he said: I adjure by Allâh whoever heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) say:

«مَنْ يُوسِّعُ لَنَا بِهَذَا الْبَيْتِ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ بِبَيْتٍ لَهُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

"Who will incorporate his house into the mosque in return for a house in Paradise?"

so I bought it with my own wealth and incorporated it into the mosque. Some men testified to that, then he said: I adjure by Allâh whoever heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) on the day of Tabook when he said:

«مَنْ يُنْفِقُ الْيَوْمَ نَفَقَةً مُتَقَبَّلَةً»

"Who will spend today and his charity will be accepted?"

So I equipped half of the army from my own wealth. Some men testified to that, then he said: I adjure by Allâh whoever saw the water of the well of Roomah being sold to wayfarers, and I bought it with my own wealth and made it free for wayfarers. He said: And some men testified to that.[1]

It was narrated that Abu Thawr al-Fahmi said: I came to 'Uthmân, and whilst I was staying with him I went out and saw that the delegation from Egypt had returned. I entered upon 'Uthmân and told him about that, and he said: How do you see them? I said: I see evil in their faces, and Ibn 'Udays al-Balawi is in charge of them. Ibn 'Udays ascended the minbar of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and led the people in praying Jumu'ah, and he

[1] *al-Musnad*, 1/59; Ahmad Shaakir said (420): Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

criticized 'Uthmân in his khutbah. I entered upon 'Uthmân and told him what he had said concerning them, and he said: Ibn 'Udays is lying, by Allâh. If he had not said that, I would not mention this. I was the fourth person to enter Islam. The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) gave his daughter to me in marriage, then she died and he gave his other daughter to me. I did not commit zina or steal during the *Jaahiliyyah* or in Islam. I have not told lies since I became Muslim and I have not touched my private part with my right hand since I swore allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ). I compiled the Qur'ân at the time of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), and since I became Muslim, no Friday ever came but I set free a slave, unless I could not find a slave that Friday, in which case I would set two free the following Friday.[1]

When 'Uthmân realized that the rebels were insisting on killing him, he warned them against that and against the consequences thereof. He looked out at them through a hole in the wall and said to them: O people, do not kill me; rather talk to me, for by Allâh, if you kill me you will never be united in a fight against your enemy, rather you will be divided until you become like that - and he interlaced his fingers.[2] According to another report he said: O people, do not kill me, for I am a ruler and a Muslim brother. By Allâh, all I wanted was to do what was best for the ummah as much as I could, whether I was right or wrong. If you kill me, you will never pray together or go on campaign together again, and you will never share your booty among you.[3] He also said: If you kill me, you will never love one another again after I am gone, and you will never fight anyone together after I am gone.[4] And what he warned them of came to pass; after he was killed, everything he said happened.

---

[1] *Al-Ma'rifah wa'l-Tareekh*, 2/488; *Khilaafat 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan* by al-Sulami, p. 91

[2] *at-Tabaqaat*, 3/71; *Tareekh Ibn Khayaat*, p. 171. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[3] *At-Tabaqaat*, 3/67, 68; *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/157; its *isnâd* is *hasan*.

[4] *Tareekh Ibn Khayaat*, p. 171; *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/157; its *isnâd* is hasan.

Concerning that, al-Hasan al-Basri said: By Allâh, even when the people pray together, their hearts are divided.[1]

The *Sahâbah*'s offer to defend 'Uthmân and his rejection thereof

'Uthmân (ﷺ) sent word to the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) consulting them about the besiegers and their threats to kill him. Their attitudes were as follows:

1. 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ)

Ibn 'Asaakir narrated from Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allâh (ﷺ) that 'Ali sent word to 'Uthmân saying: I have five hundred men with shields; give me permission to protect you against the people, for you have not done anything that would make it permissible to shed your blood. He said: May you be rewarded with good, I do not want blood to be shed for my sake.[2]

2. Az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam (ﷺ)

It was narrated that Abu Habeebah[3] said: Az-Zubayr sent me to 'Uthmân when he was being besieged and I entered upon him on a summer day. He was sitting on a chair and al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, Abu Hurayrah, 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar and 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr were with him. I said: az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam has sent me to you. He sends greetings of salaam to you and says to you: I am still loyal to you and I have not changed or retracted. If you wish, I will join you in your house, and will be one of the people there, or if you wish, I will stay where I am, because Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf have promised to come to my place, then they will follow whatever instructions I give them. When 'Uthmân heard the message, he said: *Allâhu akbar*, praise be to Allâh Who has protected my brother. Convey salaams to him and tell him: I

[1] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/157

[2] *Tareekh Dimashq*, p. 403

[3] Abu Habeebah was the freed slave of az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam who narrated from al-Zubayr and met Abu Hurayrah when 'Uthmân was being besieged.

appreciate what you said; may Allâh ward off harm from me by you. When Abu Hurayrah read the message he stood up and said: Shall I not tell you what my ears heard from the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ)? They said: Yes. He said: I bear witness that I heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) say:

«تَكُونُ بَعْدِي فِتَنٌ وَأُمُورٌ»

"After I am gone there will be turmoil and other things."

We said: Where should we turn to for safety, O Messenger of Allâh? He said:

«إِلَى الأَمِينِ وَحِزْبِهِ»

"To Al-Ameen (the trustworthy one) and his group,"

and he pointed to 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. The people stood up and said: Now we know what we should do. Give us permission to fight in *jihad*. But 'Uthmân said: I urge anyone who is supposed to obey me not to fight.[1]

2. Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah ﷺ

It was narrated that al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah (ﷺ) entered upon 'Uthmân when he was being besieged, and said: You are the ruler of the people and there has befallen you what you see. I advise you of three options; choose one of them. Either go out and fight them, for you have the numbers and strength, and you are in the right and they are in the wrong; or make a door other than the door where they are, and sit on your mount and go to Makkah, for they will not dare to attack you there; or go to Syria, for among the people of Syria is Mu'âwiyah. 'Uthmân said: As for going out and fighting them, I will not be the first one after the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) to rule the ummah by shedding its blood. As for going out to Makkah because they would not dare to attack me there, I heard the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) say:

[1] *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah*, 1/511, 512. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

«يُلْحِدُ رَجُلٌ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ بِمَكَّةَ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ نِصْفُ عَذَابِ العالَم»

"A man of Quraysh who visits Makkah with the aim of profanity or wrongdoing will have the punishment of half of mankind,"

and I will never be that one; and as for going to Syria because among the people of Syria is Mu'âwiyah, I will never leave the place to which I migrated and where I am close to the Messenger (ﷺ).[1]

4. 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr (ﷺ)

The *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) decided to defend 'Uthmân, and some of them entered the house, but 'Uthmân urged them strongly to refrain from fighting in his defence, which prevented them from fulfilling their sincere desire to defend him. Among them was 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr (ﷺ) who said to 'Uthmân: Fight them, for by Allâh, Allâh has permitted you to fight them. But 'Uthmân said: No, by Allâh, I will never fight them.[2]

According to another report he said: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, we are with you in the house, a group with strong faith, and Allâh may give victory to a smaller group than us, so give us permission to fight. But 'Uthmân said: I adjure you by Allâh that no man should shed his blood for my sake.[3] Then he appointed him in charge of the house and said: Whoever was obliged to obey me, let him obey 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr.[4]

5. Ka'b ibn Maalik al-Ansâri and Zayd ibn Thâbit al-Ansâri (ﷺ)

Ka'b ibn Maalik (ﷺ) urged the Ansâr to support 'Uthmân (ﷺ) and said to them: O *Ansâr*, be supporters of Allâh twice. So the

---

[1] *Al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/211

[2] *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd*, 3/70. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

[3] Op. cit., 3/70; *Tareekh Ibn Khayaat*, p. 173

[4] *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd*, 3/70; its *isnâd* going back to 'Abd-Allâh ibn al-Zubayr is *saheeh*.

Ansâr came to 'Uthmân and stood at his door, and Zayd ibn Thâbit entered and said to him: The Ansâr are at your door; if you wish we will be supporters of Allâh twice.[1] But 'Uthmân refused to fight and said: There is no need for that; do not do it.[2]

6. al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ)

al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (ﷺ) came and said to him: Should I unsheathe my sword? He said to him: I will never be able to justify the shedding of your blood before Allâh; put your sword back in its sheath and go back to your father.[3]

7. 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ)

When the *Sahâbah* realized that the situation was getting out of hand, some of them decided to defend him without consulting him, so some of them entered the house and prepared to fight. Ibn 'Umar was with him in the house, with his sword in his hand and his shield on his arm, ready to fight in defence of 'Uthmân (ﷺ), but 'Uthmân urged him to leave the house lest he fight with the people when they entered the house and be killed.[4]

8. Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ)

Abu Hurayrah entered the house and said to 'Uthmân: O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, now it is time to fight. He said to him: O Abu Hurayrah, would you be happy to kill all the people and me? He said: No. He said: By Allâh, if you killed a single man it would be as if you had killed all the people. So he went back and did not fight. According to another report, Abu Hurayrah had his sword in his hand, until 'Uthmân told him not to fight.[5]

9. Sulayt ibn Sulayt

He said: 'Uthmân forbade us to fight them, and if he had

---

[1] *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd,* 3/70; *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/162

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/162

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/162; *al-Musannaf* by Ibn Abi Shaybah, 152/224

[4] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/163

[5] *Tareekh Kahleefah ibn Khayaat,* p. 164

given us permission we would have driven them out of the city.[1]

Ibn Sireen said: There were seven hundred men with 'Uthmân in the house; if he had let them and if Allâh had willed, they would have driven them out of the city. Among them were Ibn 'Umar, al-Hasan ibn 'Ali and 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr. He also said: On the day when 'Uthmân was killed, the house was crowded with people, including Ibn 'Umar and al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, who had his sword around his neck, but 'Uthmân told them not to fight.[2]

Thus it is clear that the accusation that the *Sahâbah,* both *Muhâjirîn* and *Ansâr*, let 'Uthmân down, is false, and none of the reports which say that are free of serious faults in the isnaad or text or both.[3]

10. Offer of some of the *Sahâbah* to help 'Uthmân leave and go to Makkah

When some of the *Sahâbah* saw that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was insisting on refusing to fight the besiegers, and that the besiegers were insisting on killing him, they could find no other way to protect him but to offer to help him to leave and go to Makkah, to escape from the besiegers. It was narrated that 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah and Usaamah ibn Zayd all suggested that to him separately, each of them making the suggestion by himself, but 'Uthmân (ﷺ) refused all of these offers.[4]

- The reasons why 'Uthmân told the *Sahâbah* not to fight

From the reports of the turmoil, researchers have found five reasons for that, which are:

1- Following the advice of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ)

[1] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/165

[2] *Tareekh Dimashq* by Ibn 'Asaakir, Tarjamat 'Uthmân, p. 395

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/166

[4] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/166

which he told him in secret and which 'Uthmân announced on the day of the siege, which is a promise that he made to him, that he would bear it with patience.[1]

2- 'Uthmân's words: I will never be the first of the successors of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) to shed blood among his ummah. He did not want to be the first of the successors of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) to shed the blood of the Muslims.[2]

3- He knew that the rebels were not after anyone else, and he did not want to use the believers as a shield to protect himself, rather he wanted to be a shield to protect them.[3]

4- He knew that this turmoil would involve his being killed, from what the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had told him when he gave him the glad tidings of Paradise for a calamity that would befall him, and that he would be killed when adhering patiently to the truth. The evidence indicated that the time for that had come, and that was supported by a dream which he saw the night before he was killed, in which he saw the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and he said to him:

«أَفْطِرْ عِنْدَنَا القَابِلَةَ»

"Break your fast with us tomorrow."

From that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) understood that the time of his martyrdom was at hand.

[1] *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah,* 1/605; its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/167; *al-Musnad,* (1/396), Ahmad Shaakir.

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân;* there is some weakness in the *isnâd* of the report.

5- Acting on the advice of Ibn Salaam (ﷺ) who said to him: Refrain from fighting, for that will give you a stronger position against them (on the Day of Resurrection).[1]

The Prophet's foretelling that 'Uthmân would be killed was fulfilled, as it was narrated by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Hawaalah[2] (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«مَنْ نَجَا مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ فَقَدْ نَجَا ـ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ ـ مَوْتِي ، وَالدَّجَّالِ وَقَتْلِ خَلِيفَةٍ مُصْطَبِرٍ بِالحَقِّ مُعْطِيهِ»

"Whoever is saved from three is indeed saved - three times - : my death, the Dajjaal and the murder of a caliph who is killed adhering to the truth and fulfilling his duty."[3]

From the above we can see how calm 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was in his thinking, for the severity of the calamity did not prevent him from thinking clearly and taking the right decisions. So many reasons came together to make him take a peaceful position with regard to fighting those who had rebelled against him. Undoubtedly he (ﷺ) was in the right in all his stances that he took, because it was narrated in sound reports that the Prophet (ﷺ) had referred to this turmoil, and had testified that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) and his companions would be in the right.[4]

Ibn Taymiyah (ﷺ) said: It is known through *mutawaatir* reports that 'Uthmân was among the most careful of people to avoid bloodshed and among the most patient towards those who impugned his honour and those who plotted to shed his blood, so they besieged him and sought to kill him. He knew of their intention to kill him, and the Muslims came to defend him and

[1] *At-Tabaqaat*, 3/71; its *isnâd* is *hasan*.

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/168; its *isnâd* is *hasan* or *saheeh*.

[3] *Musnad Ahmad*, 4/106, no. 16973.

[4] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/168; see the *saheeh ahaadeeth* to which I have referred in the sections on his virtues and on the Prophet's foretelling of his killing in this book.

advised him to fight them, but he told the people to refrain from fighting and ordered those who should obey him not to fight them. It was said to him: Will you go to Makkah? And he said: I will not be one of those who cause the sanctuary to be violated. It was said to him: Will you go to Syria? He said: I will not leave the land to which I migrated. It was said to him: Then fight them, but he said: I will not be the first of the successors of Muhammad to rule his ummah by the sword. The patience that 'Uthmân showed until he was killed is among the greatest of his virtues in the eyes of the Muslims.[1]

The attitude of the Mothers of the Believers and some of the female *Sahâbah*

Umm Habeebah bint Abi Sufyân (ﷺ)

The stance taken by Umm Habeebah, the Mother of the Believers, concerning these events was a very serious one, as she was nearly killed for 'Uthmân's sake. When 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was besieged and water was withheld from him, 'Uthmân sent a son of 'Amr ibn Hazam al-Ansâri - who was one of his neighbours - to 'Ali to tell him: They are withholding water from us; if you can, send us some of your surplus water. He also sent word to Talhah, az-Zubayr, 'Aa'ishah and the other wives of the Prophet (ﷺ). The first ones to come to his aid were 'Ali and Umm Habeebah.[2] Umm Habeebah was very concerned about 'Uthmân, as Ibn 'Asaakir said, and this was entirely natural on her part, as they shared a common lineage and were from the same tribe (Banu Umayyah). Umm Habeebah came and they struck the face of her mule, and she said: The wills of Banu Umayyah are all with this man; I want to meet him and ask him about that so that the wills of the widows and orphans will not be lost. They said: You are lying; and they struck out at her with their swords, and cut the rope of her mule, which started running away with Umm

[1] *Minhaaj as-Sunnah,* 3/202, 203

[2] *Dawr al-Mar'ah as-Siyaasi,* by Asma' Muhammad, p. 340

Habeebah. The people tried to stop it, and the saddle tilted, so they grabbed hold of it and stopped the mule, but Umm Habeebah was nearly killed. Then they took her back to her house.[1] It seems that she (ﷺ) told her freed slave Ibn al-Jarraah to stay close to 'Uthmân (ﷺ), and the events that took place in the house (of 'Uthmân) happened when Ibn al-Jarraah was present.[2]

Safiyyah the wife of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ)

Safiyyah (ﷺ) did something similar to what Umm Habeebah did. It was narrated that Kinaanah[3] said: I was leading Safiyyah's mule when she went and tried to defend 'Uthmân, and she was met by al-Ashtar.[4] He struck the face of her mule until the saddle tilted, and she said: Let me go back for I do not want this to expose me. Then she put a piece of wood from her house to 'Uthmân's, and transported food and water on it.[5]

'Aa'ishah the Mother of the Believers (ﷺ)

When that happened to Umm Habeebah, the people were very upset and 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) left Madînah filled with anger against the rebels. Marwaan ibn al-Hakam came to her and said: O Mother of the Believers, if you had stayed they would have shown some respect towards this man. She said: Do you want to happen to me what happened to Umm Habeebah? And there is no one there to defend me. No, by Allâh, I do not want to be in such a humiliating situation. I do not know where this matter will end.[6] She (ﷺ) thought that by leaving it might help to disperse the crowds as may be explained by a second report, so the Mothers of the Believers prepared to flee from the turmoil, but

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/402; quoted in *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi,* p. 340

[2] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* 2/298

[3] Kinaanah ibn 'Adiyy ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza ibn 'Abd Shams ibn 'Abd Manaaf al-'Abshami

[4] *Dawr al-Mar'ah as-Siyaasi,* p. 340

[5] *Siyar A'laam al-Nibala',* 2/237

[6] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/401

their departure was not aimed only at escaping the turmoil, so it was not merely an escape; rather it was an attempt to save 'Uthmân from the hands of those who were deceived, among whom was Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, the brother of 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ), who had tried to get him to follow her to *Hajj*, but he had refused. What led to this attempt on her part to get him to follow her and his refusal to do so, was so obvious that Hanzalah the scribe[1] was surprised when Muhammad refused to follow 'Aa'ishah. He compared this refusal with his following of the people from the regions and said: O Muhammad, the Mother of the Believers is calling you but you do not follow her, and the wolves[2] of the Arabs are calling you to something that is not permissible, and you follow them. But he refused.

'Aaishah (ﷺ) said: By Allâh, if I could stop them, I would do it.[3] These words of hers, which she said after trying to persuade her brother, indicate that she had begun her attempt to make the rebels disperse from besieging 'Uthmân and to stir up public opinion against them from the time they first started to think of going to Makkah. This is what was confirmed by Imam Ibn al-'Arabi, who said: It was narrated that their leaving - i.e., the leaving of the Mothers of the Believers with a number of the *Sahâbah* - was meant as a means to put an end to the turmoil, in the hope that the people would follow their mothers, the Mothers of the Believers, respect the sanctity of their Prophet[4] and listen to their words, as they used to come from the furthest horizons to listen to them.[5] In other words, their leaving for Makkah was an attempt to disperse these crowds, because it was the custom of the people to ask their opinion and consult them, and they - may Allâh be pleased with them all - never imagined that it would

[1] Hanzalah ibn Rabee' al-Tameemi, who used to write down the Revelation for the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), and was called the scribe *(al-kaatib)*.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/401

[3] ibid.

[4] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, p. 156

[5] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi*, p. 342

reach a point where these people would kill the caliph (ﷺ).[1]

How the female *Sahâbah* dealt with the situation

(a) Asma' bint 'Umays ﷺ

Asma' bint 'Umays tried to do the same thing as the Mother of the Believers 'Aa'ishah had done. She sent word to her two sons, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and Muhammad ibn Ja'far[2], saying: The lamp consumes itself in order give light to the people, so do not indulge in sin for something that will benefit someone else. The thing that you are trying to achieve now will end up being for someone else later on, so beware lest your actions today lead to regret. But they would not listen and they left angrily, saying: We will never forget what 'Uthmân did to us. And she said: All he did to you was command you to adhere to the way of Allâh.[3] And it was said that this conversation took place between Layla bint Asma' and her two brothers.[4]

In this case, she was referring to when the people of the regions had come to Madînah then come back again after they had debated with 'Uthmân (ﷺ), and he had debated with them and established proof against them, then they pretended that they were returning to their homelands, then they soon came back, claiming that 'Uthmân had sent a man with instructions that the people be killed, including - or so they claimed - Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr.[5] This is probably what Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr was referring to when he said: We will never forget what 'Uthmân did to us. But 'Uthmân denied having anything to do with this letter and he said: Either bring two men to witness against me, or I will give you my oath that I never wrote (the letter) or told anyone else

---

[1] op. cit., p. 343

[2] Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Taalib, whose mother was Asma' bint 'Umays al-Khash'amiyyah. He was born in Abyssinia, and was present at Siffeen with 'Ali, and was with his brother Muhammad in Egypt when he was killed.

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/202

[4] op. cit., 5/202

[5] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi*, p. 343

to write (it). It is possible that a letter could be forged and falsely attributed to a man, or his signature or seal could be forged.[1]

Asma' (ﷺ) was aware of what as happening, namely plots to shake the foundation of the Islamic state and depose 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân (ﷺ) from the caliphate. Hence her attitude towards her two sons and her clear understanding of the matter caused her not to be influenced by the fact that she was a mother, and she took the right stance with regard to this clear situation. This attitude is undoubtedly very significant and gives a clear image of the dignity and good character of the noble *Sahâbah*.[2]

(b) al-Sa'bah bint al-Hadrami

When the siege intensified, al-Sa'bah bint al-Hadrami asked her son Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh to speak to 'Uthmân and make him change his mind about exposing himself to danger and not allowing the *Sahâbah* to come to his defence or seeking help from the governors of other provinces. Al-Sa'bah bint al-Hadrami went out and said to her son Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh: The siege of 'Uthmân has intensified; why don't you speak to him and make him change his mind?[3] This report clearly shows that al-Sa'bah was concerned about 'Uthmân (ﷺ), and that Umm 'Abd-Allâh ibn Raafi' was also concerned about the matter and was following developments as the turmoil progressed,[4] as she is the one who narrated this incident from al-Sa'bah bint al-Hadrami.[5]

This was the attitude of the Muslim women in general, a balanced attitude that was able to see things as they really were, despite the clouds that were surrounding the scene. Whatever the case, this was the attitude of all the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ).[6]

---

[1] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim,* p. 120

[2] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi,* p. 344

[3] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi,* p. 345

[4] ibid.

[5] op. cit., p. 345

[6] op. cit., p. 345, 346.

Who led the people in *Hajj* that year? Did 'Uthmân ask the governors for help?

Who led the people in *Hajj* in 35 AH?

'Uthmân summoned 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Abbaas and told him to lead the people in *Hajj* that year. Ibn 'Abbaas said to him: Let me stay with you and be by your side, O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, to confront these people, for by Allâh, fighting in *jihad* against these rebels is dearer to me than *Hajj*. 'Uthmân said to him: I insist that you lead the Muslims in *Hajj*. So Ibn 'Abbaas had no choice but to obey the caliph. 'Uthmân wrote a letter that he sent with Ibn 'Abbaas to be read out to the Muslims on *Hajj*, in which he explained what was going on with those who had rebelled against him, his attitude towards them, and their demands on him.[1] This is what was said in the letter of 'Uthmân addressed to the Muslims on the occasion of *Hajj* in 35 AH:

In the name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From the slave of Allâh, 'Uthmân the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* to the believers and Muslims. Peace be upon you. I praise Allâh besides Whom there is no other god. To proceed: I remind you of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, Who has blessed you and guided you to Islam, and has saved you from misguidance and disbelief, and has shown you clear signs, bestowed abundant provision upon you, granted you victory over your enemy and bestowed His blessings upon you. Allâh ﷻ says, and His word is true:

﴿وَءَاتَىٰكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ﴾

"And He gave you of all that you asked for, and if you count the Blessings of Allâh, never will you be able to count them. Verily, man is indeed an extreme wrongdoer, a disbeliever (an extreme ingrate who denies Allâh's Blessings by disbelief, and by

[1] *Al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 167, 168

worshipping others besides Allâh, and by disobeying Allâh and His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ)" (*Ibraaheem* 14:34)

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسۡلِمُونَ
○ وَٱعۡتَصِمُواْ بِحَبۡلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعٗا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُواْۚ وَٱذۡكُرُواْ نِعۡمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡكُمۡ إِذۡ كُنتُمۡ
أَعۡدَآءٗ فَأَلَّفَ بَيۡنَ قُلُوبِكُمۡ فَأَصۡبَحۡتُم بِنِعۡمَتِهِۦٓ إِخۡوَٰنٗا وَكُنتُمۡ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفۡرَةٖ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ
فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنۡهَاۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَهۡتَدُونَ ○ وَلۡتَكُن مِّنكُمۡ أُمَّةٞ
يَدۡعُونَ إِلَى ٱلۡخَيۡرِ وَيَأۡمُرُونَ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَيَنۡهَوۡنَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِۚ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ
○ وَلَا تَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُواْ وَٱخۡتَلَفُواْ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ ٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتُۚ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٞ﴾

"O you who believe! Fear Allâh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always,) and die not except in a state of Islam [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allâh)]. And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh (i.e. this Qur'ân), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allâh's Favour on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic Faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allâh makes His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.,) clear to you, that you may be guided. Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma'roof (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful. And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment" (*Al 'Imraan* 3:102-105)

﴿وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَةَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَـٰقَهُ ٱلَّذِى وَاثَقَكُم بِهِۦٓ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ﴾

"And remember Allâh's Favour to you and His Covenant with which He bound you when you said: 'We hear and we obey.' And fear Allâh. Verily, Allâh is All-Knower of that which is in (the secrets of your) hearts" (*Al-Maa'idah* 5:7)

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن جَآءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌۢ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ أَن تُصِيبُوا۟ قَوْمًۢا بِجَهَـٰلَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَـٰدِمِينَ ۝ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْإِيمَـٰنَ وَزَيَّنَهُۥ فِى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلْكُفْرَ وَٱلْفُسُوقَ وَٱلْعِصْيَانَ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلرَّٰشِدُونَ ۝ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً ۚ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

"O you who believe! If a Faasiq (liar - evil person) comes to you with any news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done. And know that among you there is the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ). If he were to obey you (i.e. follow your opinions and desires) in much of the matter, you would surely be in trouble. But Allâh has endeared the Faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts, and has made disbelief, wickedness and disobedience (to Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ) hateful to you. Such are they who are the rightly guided. (This is) a Grace from Allâh and His Favour. And Allâh is All-Knowing, All-Wise" (*Al-Hujuraat* 49:6-8)

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَيْمَـٰنِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَا خَلَـٰقَ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَا يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾

"Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allâh's

Covenant and their oaths, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter (Paradise). Neither will Allâh speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful torment" (*Al 'Imraan* 3:77)

﴿فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا ٱسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ وَأَنفِقُوا۟ خَيْرًا لِّأَنفُسِكُمْ ۗ وَمَن يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can; listen and obey, and spend in charity; that is better for yourselves. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, then they are the successful ones" (*At-Taghaabun* 64:16)

﴿وَأَوْفُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ إِذَا عَٰهَدتُّمْ وَلَا تَنقُضُوا۟ ٱلْأَيْمَٰنَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ۝ وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّتِى نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِنۢ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنكَٰثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا بَيْنَكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِىَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦ ۚ وَلَيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ مَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ۝ وَلَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَلَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ أَيْمَٰنَكُمْ دَخَلًۢا بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌۢ بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَتَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلسُّوٓءَ بِمَا صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا۟ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝ مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

"And fulfil the Covenant of Allâh (Bay'ah: pledge for Islam) when you have covenanted, and break not the oaths after you have confirmed them - and indeed you have appointed Allâh your surety. Verily, Allâh knows what you do. And be not like her who undoes the thread which she has spun, after it has become strong, by taking your oaths as a means of deception among yourselves, lest a nation should be more numerous than

another nation. Allâh only tests you by this (i.e. who obeys Allâh and fulfils Allâh's Covenant and who disobeys Allâh and breaks Allâh's Covenant). And on the Day of Resurrection, He will certainly make clear to you that wherein you used to differ (i.e. a believer confesses and believes in the Oneness of Allâh and in the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ which the disbeliever denies and that is their difference amongst them in the life of this world). And had Allâh willed, He could have made you (all) one nation, but He sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. But you shall certainly be called to account for what you used to do. And make not your oaths, a means of deception among yourselves, lest a foot should slip after being firmly planted, and you may have to taste the evil (punishment in this world) of having hindered (men) from the path of Allâh (i.e. belief in the Oneness of Allâh and His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ), and yours will be a great torment (i.e. the fire of Hell in the Hereafter). And purchase not a small gain at the cost of Allâh's Covenant. Verily, what is with Allâh is better for you if you did but know. Whatever is with you, will be exhausted, and whatever is with Allâh (of good deeds) will remain. And those who are patient, We will certainly pay them a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do" (*An-Nahl* 16:91-96)

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ وَأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ ۖ فَإِن تَنَـٰزَعْتُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾

"O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (ﷺ), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination" (*An-Nisa'* 4:59)

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ
لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۚ وَمَن
كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

"Allâh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will surely, give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Faasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh)" (*An-Noor* 24:55)

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ فَمَن نَّكَثَ
فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهُ اللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا
عَظِيمًا﴾

"Verily, those who give Bay'ah (pledge) to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) they are giving Bay'ah (pledge) to Allâh. The Hand of Allâh is over their hands. Then whosoever breaks his pledge, breaks it only to his own harm; and whosoever fulfils what he has covenanted with Allâh, He will bestow on him a great reward" (*Al-Fath* 48:10)

To proceed: Allâh wants you to hear and obey, and to be united, and He warns you against disobedience, division and dissent. He has told you about the behaviour and attitude of those who came before you, and He has told you of that so that you will have no excuse if you disobey Him. So accept the advice of Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, and beware of His punishment,

for you will never find any nation that was doomed but that came about after they were divided, unless they had a leader to rally behind. When you are divided, you are not going to pray all together, Allâh will give your enemies power over you and you will violate the sanctity of one other. When that happens, then Islam will no longer be strong and will be broken up into sects. Allâh says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا۟ شِيَعًا لَّسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِى شَىْءٍ ۚ إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ
ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ﴾

"Verily, those who divide their religion and break up into sects (all kinds of religious sects), you (O Muhammad ﷺ) have no concern in them in the least. Their affair is only with Allâh, Who then will tell them what they used to do" (*Al-An'aam* 6:159).

I advise you to pay heed to what Allâh has enjoined upon you and to beware of His punishment. Shu'ayb (ﷺ) said to his people:

﴿وَيَٰقَوْمِ لَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شِقَاقِىٓ أَن يُصِيبَكُم مِّثْلُ مَآ أَصَابَ قَوْمَ نُوحٍ أَوْ قَوْمَ
هُودٍ أَوْ قَوْمَ صَٰلِحٍ ۚ وَمَا قَوْمُ لُوطٍ مِّنكُم بِبَعِيدٍ ۝ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ
ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ﴾

"And O my people! Let not my Shiqaaq[1] *cause you to suffer the fate similar to that of the people of Noh (Noah) or of Hood or of Saalih (Saleh), and the people of Loot (Lot) are not far off from you! And ask forgiveness of your Lord and turn unto Him in repentance. Verily, my Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving"* (*Hood* 11:89, 90).

To proceed: These people who were involved in this matter

---

[1] (V.11:89) i.e. separation, enmity, anger and opposition, because of your disbelief in the Oneness of Allâh (Monotheism), and your worship of the idols, and your defrauding of the people (in their things), and your giving of short measure and weights to the people.

presented themselves to others as calling them to the Book of Allâh and the truth, and claimed that they were not seeking worldly gains or competing in worldly matters. But when the truth was presented to them, they responded in different ways. Some accepted the truth and were content with it when it was shown to them; some turned away from the truth and ignored it, wanting their own way with no right (to do that). I have lived too long for them and they are rushing to seize a position of authority, so they are trying to hasten my death. They wrote to you and told you that they were content with the deal that I had given them, and I am not aware that I changed my mind or went against the deal that I had made with them. They claimed that they want justice to be done (*hadd* punishments), and I said: Carry out the *hadd* punishment against anyone who you know deserves a *hadd* punishment and against anyone who has wronged you, whether he is a relative or a stranger. They said: The Book of Allâh is being recited. I said: Anyone may recite it without misinterpreting it in a way different than what was revealed. They said: The one who has been deprived should given provision and wealth should be given to those who deserve it, and there should be no transgression with regard to the *khums* or the zakaah; people of ability and honesty should be appointed as governors and the rights of those who have been wronged should be restored to them. I accepted that and showed patience towards them. I am writing to you when those who are involved in this matter are seeking to hasten my death and they have prevented me from praying; they have stopped me from going to the mosque and have confiscated whatever they could in Madînah. I have written this letter to you when they are giving me three choices: either they will settle the score with me regarding every man I have dealt with, whether I was right or wrong, without leaving anyone out; or I should give up the caliphate and they will appoint someone else; or they will send word to the troops and people of Madînah who will obey them and they will disown the one whom Allâh enjoined them to hear and obey. I said to them: As for settling the scores with me, the caliphs who came before me sometimes got things wrong and

sometimes got them right, but there were no scores to be settled with any of them. I am certain that they want to kill me. As for me giving up my position, for them to beat me with an iron stirrup is dearer to me than my giving up what I am doing for the sake of Allâh and the caliphate. As for them saying that they will send word to the troops and people of Madînah so that they will no longer obey me, I am not in charge of what you do and I did not force them before to hear and obey, rather they offered their obedience willingly, seeking the pleasure of Allâh and harmony among the Muslims. Whoever among you is seeking worldly gain will not get anything but that which Allâh has decreed for him, and whoever is seeking the Countenance of Allâh and the Hereafter, the interests of the ummah, the pleasure of Allâh and following the good ways of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and the two caliphs who came after him (ﷺ), it is only Allâh Who gives reward for that and I have no reward for you. Even if I gave you the whole world, it would not be the price for your religious commitment and it would not help you in any way. So fear Allâh and seek reward with Him. If anyone among you is content to turn back on his heels, that is not what I want for him, and Allâh does not want you to break your covenant with Him. As for the choices that you are giving me, they are all about dismissing me from my position and appointing someone else. I have controlled myself and those who are with me. I thought of the decree of Allâh and blessings can only be bestowed and taken away by Allâh, may He be glorified. I did not want to set a precedent that would lead to division and bloodshed. I adjure you by Allâh and by Islam to only follow the truth and direct me to follow the truth; do not wrong the people of truth. Let justice rule between us as Allâh has commanded you. I adjure you by Allâh Who has enjoined you to follow His commandments, for Allâh says and His Word is true:

﴿وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا۟ بِٱلْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔولًا﴾

"And come not near to the orphan's property except to improve

it, until he attains the age of full strength. And fulfil (every) covenant. Verily, the covenant will be questioned about" (*Al-Isra'* 17:34).

Thus I seek to be free of guilt before Allâh (cf. Al-A'raaf 7:164), and perhaps you may heed this reminder. To proceed: I do not free myself from blame.

﴿وَمَآ أُبَرِّئُ نَفْسِيٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلنَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌۢ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّيٓ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

"And I free not myself (from the blame). Verily, the (human) self is inclined to evil, except when my Lord bestows His Mercy (upon whom He wills). Verily, my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (*Yoosuf* 12:53).

If I punished some people, I only did it for a good reason, and I repent to Allâh ﷻ for everything that I have done. I seek His forgiveness, for no one forgives sins but Him. The mercy of my Lord encompasses all things, and no one despairs of the mercy of Allâh but those who have gone astray. He accepts repentance from His slaves and forgives bad deeds, and He knows what you are doing. I ask Allâh ﷻ to forgive me and you, and to reconcile this ummah and make evil abhorrent to them. Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allâh and His blessings, O believers and Muslims.

Ibn 'Abbaas said: I read this letter to them in Makkah one day before al-Tarwiyah.[1]

Did 'Uthmân ask the governors to support him?

Sayf ibn 'Umar claimed in his report narrated by al-Tabari that when 'Uthmân was besieged, he wrote to his governors in the regions asking them for help, and Mu'âwiyah sent Habeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri at the head of an army; 'Abd-Allâh ibn Sa'd in

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/425-431

Egypt did likewise, sending Mu'âwiyah ibn Hudayj; and al-Qa'aa' ibn 'Amr came from Kufah leading his forces.[1] But this claim is not in accordance with the attitude of 'Uthmân who dealt with the turmoil by erring on the side of caution and refraining from taking action; neither is it in accordance with his certainty that he would be killed. It is contrary to his attitude of turning away those of the senior *Sahâbah* and their sons who wanted to defend him. He even emphatically forbade his slaves and freed slaves to fight; rather he promised manumission to those of them who refrained from fighting, as we shall see. But it can be imagined that just as some of the *Sahâbah* hastened to defend him without him asking them to, and despite his many attempts to turn them away, so many large groups of Muslim soldiers in the other regions hastened to defend the wronged caliph on their own initiative, or on the instructions of their commanders. We should not think that a man such as Mu'âwiyah, who was so close to 'Uthmân, would be content to sit down and do nothing and not send an army of troops to defend him. We cannot assume that men such as 'Uthmân's supporters in Egypt - led by Mu'âwiyah ibn Hudayj, Maslamah ibn Mukhallad and other Muslim heroes - would sit and wait until the caliph was killed before making a move to avenge him and expose themselves to being killed in that way. Rather what we can imagine and assume is that troops from the regions were on the move, coming to Madînah to support the caliph without him asking them to do that.[2]

The last *khutbah* delivered by 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

The last public meeting that 'Uthmân had with the Muslims was several weeks into the siege, when he summoned the people and they all gathered in response, both the Saba'i rebels and the peaceful residents of Madînah, foremost among whom were 'Ali, Talhah and az-Zubayr. When they sat before him, he said to them: Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, has given you this world

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/379, 380

[2] *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen*, p. 278, 279

as a means of seeking the Hereafter; He has not given you this world for you to be content with it. This world is transient but the Hereafter will abide forever, so do not let that which is transient distract you from that which will abide forever. Show preference to that which will abide forever over that which is transient. This world will come to an end and your destiny will be with Allâh. Fear Allâh, may He be glorified and exalted, for fear of Him is a protection and a shield against His wrath and punishment. Adhere to the main body of the Muslims and do not break into factions. Allâh says:

﴿وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا۟ ۚ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنتُمْ أَعْدَآءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِۦٓ إِخْوَٰنًا وَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ ٱلنَّارِ فَأَنقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allâh (i.e. this Qur'ân), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allâh's Favour on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic Faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allâh makes His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.,) clear to you, that you may be guided" (*Al 'Imraan* 3:103).

Then he said to the Muslims: O people of Madînah, I bid you farewell, and I ask Allâh to appoint a good caliph for you after I am gone. By Allâh, I shall never enter upon anyone again after this day until Allâh lets His decree come to pass. I shall leave these rebels outside the door and I shall not give them anything that they might use against you in religious or worldly terms, until Allâh decrees whatever He wills. He commanded the people of Madînah to leave and swore an oath urging them to do so, so they left except for al-Hasan, Muhammad, Ibn az-Zubayr and others like them, who sat at 'Uthmân's door on their fathers' orders, and

many people gathered around them. And 'Uthmân stayed in the house until he met his fate.[1]

The martyrdom of 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

In addition to the armies coming from the regions to support the caliph, the days of *Hajj* had ended quickly and scores of pilgrims were now marching towards Madînah to support the caliph too, especially since 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Abbaas, 'Aa'ishah and others were coming to defend 'Uthmân. News reached the rebels that the pilgrims wanted to come to support 'Uthmân. When they heard that news, along with news of the hatred that the people of the regions felt towards them, the Shaytaan whispered to them and tempted them, and they said: Nothing can save us from what we have let ourselves in for but killing this man, and that will distract the people from us.[2]

The last day of the siege and the dream that 'Uthmân saw

On the last day of the siege - which is the day on which he was killed - 'Uthmân (ﷺ) fell asleep and that morning he told the people: They are going to kill me today.[3] Then he said: I saw the Prophet (ﷺ) in my dream. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were with him, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: O 'Uthmân, break your fast with us. He was fasting, and he was killed that day.[4]

How he was killed

The rebels attacked the house and were confronted by al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, Muhammad ibn Talhah, Marwaan ibn al-Hakam and Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas, and other sons of the *Sahâbah* who stayed with them. Fighting broke out and 'Uthmân called to them: Allâh, Allâh; I don't want you to defend

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/399, 400

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/402

[3] *at-Tabaqaat* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/75; *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/172

[4] *at-Tabaqaat,* 3/75. The report is hasan because of corroborating evidence. *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/175

me. But they insisted, and 'Uthmân's slaves came in to defend him, but he told them not to do that, rather he announced that whoever among them refrained from fighting would be a free man.[1] 'Uthmân said clearly and decisively, as the caliph who was to be obeyed: I insist that everyone who believes that he is obliged to hear and obey should restrain himself and refrain from fighting.[2] The only justification for saying that was that 'Uthmân was certain that he would become a martyr, based on the testimony of the Prophet (ﷺ). Hence he did not want blood to be shed on his account or division to arise among the Muslims because of him.[3]

Al-Mugheerah ibn al-Akhnas was among those who had done *Hajj*, then hastened to leave Mina after two days instead of three, along with a group who had performed *Hajj* with him. He managed to come to 'Uthmân before he was killed; he entered the house to protect him and said: What excuse will we have before Allâh if we leave you when we are able to stop them until we die? The rebels came and wanted to burn down the door and portico, but the people in the house leapt up to stop them, whilst 'Uthmân was praying. Al-Mugheerah ibn al-Akhnas, al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, Muhammad ibn Talhah, Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas, Marwaan ibn al-Hakam and Abu Hurayrah fought and did their utmost, but 'Uthmân sent word to them telling them to leave and not fight, then he went back to his prayer. He started to read:

﴿طه ۝ مَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِتَشْقَىٰٓ ۝ إِلَّا تَذْكِرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَىٰ﴾

"Ta-Ha. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings]. We have not sent down the Qur'ân unto you (O Muhammad ﷺ) to cause you distress, But only as a Reminder to those who fear (Allâh)" (*Tâ-Hâ* 20:1-3).

---

[1] *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen*, p. 282; *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/190

[2] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, p. 133

[3] *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah fi 'Asr al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen*, p. 283

He was a fast reader, and he was not disturbed by what he heard. He carried on reading and did not make any mistake or stumble, until he came to the end of the soorah before they reached him. Then he recited a du'aa' and sat down and recited the verse

﴿قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ﴾

"Many similar ways (and mishaps of life) were faced by nations (believers and disbelievers) that have passed away before you (as you have faced in the battle of Uhud), so travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who disbelieved (in the Oneness of Allâh, and disobeyed Him and His Messengers)" (*Al 'Imraan* 3:137).

On that day, four young men of Quraysh were injured: al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, 'Abd-Allâh ibn az-Zubayr, Muhammad ibn Haatib and Marwaan ibn al-Hakam.[1] Al-Mugheerah ibn al-Akhnas, Niyaar ibn 'Abd-Allâh al-Aslami[2] and Ziyaad al-Fihri were killed. 'Uthmân managed to persuade the defenders to leave the house and leave him alone with the rebels. So no one was left in the house except 'Uthmân and his family, and there was no defender or guard between him and the people, then he (ﷺ) opened the door of the house.[3]

After those who had wanted to defend him had left the house, 'Uthmân spread the *Mus-haf* before him and began to read from it, and at that time he was fasting. Then one of the besiegers, whose name is not mentioned in the reports, entered upon him. When 'Uthmân (ﷺ) saw him he said to him: Between me and you there is the Book of Allâh.[4] So the man went out and left him alone.

---

[1] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/169; *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/404. A *saheeh* report.

[2] *Al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 184, 185; *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/196

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/188

[4] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/405, 406

But no sooner had he left but another one came in. He was a man from Banu Sadoos who was called al-Mawt al-Aswad (the Black Death). He strangled him before striking him with the sword. He said: By Allâh, I never saw anything more soft when strangling. I strangled him until I felt that his soul was moving in his body like a jinni[1] . Then he struck him with his sword, and 'Uthmân tried to protect himself with his hand, but he cut it off. 'Uthmân said: By Allâh, it was the first hand to write *al-Mufassal*.[2] That was because he was one of the scribes who wrote down the Revelation, and he had been the first one to write the *Mus-haf* as dictated by the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ). 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was killed when the *Mus-haf* was in front of him, and when his hand was cut off, the blood spilled onto the *Mus-haf* that was in front of him, and it fell upon the verse:

﴿فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ﴾

"So Allâh will suffice for you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:137).[3]

According to another report, the first one to strike him was a man who was called Rumaan al-Yamaani, who struck him with a short, hooked staff.

When they surrounded him, his wife Naa'ilah bint al-Faraafisah said: Whether you kill him or spare him, he used to stay up all night, reciting the entire Qur'ân in a single rak'ah.[4] Naa'ilah defended her husband 'Uthmân and shielded him, and she received several blows of the sword on her hands. Sawdaan ibn Hamraan went to her and struck her fingers, and cut them off. She turned away and he poked her in the hips.[5]

---

[1] *Tareekh Ibn Khayaat*, p. 174, 175. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh* or hasan.

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/398

[3] op. cit., 5/398. The report has numerous *isnâds*, which when taken together bring it to the level of hasan due to corroborating evidence.

[4] *at-Tabaqaat*, 3/76; *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/191

[5] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/406, 407

When one of the slaves of 'Uthmân, whose name was Nujayh, saw what was happening, he was distressed by the killing of 'Uthmân. Nujayh attacked Sawdaan ibn Hamraan and killed him, and when Qutayrah ibn Fulaan al-Sakooni saw that Nujayh had killed Sawdaan, he attacked Nujayh and killed him. Then another slave of 'Uthmân, whose name was Subayh, attacked Qutayrah ibn Fulaan and killed him. So there were four who were killed in the house, two martyrs and two criminals. The martyrs were 'Uthmân and his slave Nujayh, and the criminals were Sawdaan and Qutayrah, who were both from the tribe of Sakoon. When 'Uthmân (ﷺ) had been killed, a caller from among the Saba'is cried out: It cannot be the case that the man's blood is permissible for us and his property is forbidden for us; his property is permissible for us too. So they ransacked the house, and the Saba'i thugs did a lot of mischief in the house. They ransacked everything, even taking the jewellery that the women were wearing. One of the Saba'is whose name was *Kulthoom al-Tajeebi* attacked 'Uthmân's wife Naa'ilah and took the abayah that she was wearing, then he poked her in the hips and said to her: Woe to your mother, what a perfect backside. 'Uthmân's slave Subayh saw that and heard the ugly words he said to Naa'ilah, so he attacked him with a sword and killed him.[1] Then one of the Saba'is attacked the slave and killed him. After the Saba'is had finished ransacking the house of 'Uthmân, they called out: Let us go and raid the *bayt al-maal* before anyone else gets there, and take whatever is in it. The guards of the *bayt al-maal* heard their voices, but there was nothing in it except two containers of food, so they said: Save yourselves, for these people are after worldly gains. The Saba'is attacked the *bayt al-maal* and ransacked it.[2]

The Saba'i rebels achieved their aim of killing the caliph. But after that, many of the thugs and hooligans who had followed them stopped and thought. They had never thought that it would

[1] op. cit., 5/407

[2] ibid.

end with them killing him, but the devilish Saba'is had fooled them and used them to stir up trouble against 'Uthmân. But killing him was something that they found abhorrent and could not accept. These thugs regretted it, and there happened to them the same as happened to the Children of Israel when they worshipped the calf: some of them regretted it as Allâh says:

﴿وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ مِنْ حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهُۥ خُوَارٌ ۚ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا
أَنَّهُۥ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا ۘ اتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا ظَٰلِمِينَ ۝ وَلَمَّا
سُقِطَ فِىٓ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا لَئِن لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَٰسِرِينَ﴾

"And the people of Moosa (Moses) made in his absence, out of their ornaments, the image of a calf (for worship). It had a sound (as if it was mooing). Did they not see that it could neither speak to them nor guide them to the way? They took it (for worship) and they were Zaalimoon (wrongdoers). And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they (repented and) said: 'If our Lord have not mercy upon us and forgive us, we shall certainly be of the losers'" (*Al-A'raaf* 7:148-149).[1]

The righteous people in Madînah were grieved by the murder of their caliph, and they began to say *Inna Lillaahi wa inna ilayhi raaji'oon* (Truly, to Allâh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return), and wept. But what could they do when the rebel Saba'i armies were occupying Madînah and spreading mischief and preventing its people from doing anything? The de facto ruler of Madînah was the leader of the Egyptian rebels, al-Ghaafiqi ibn Harb al-'Akki, and they had with them the architect of their devilish plans, 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', who was rejoicing greatly at the achievement of his fiendish aims.

---

[1] *Al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/197, 198

The senior *Sahâbah* commented on the murder of 'Uthmân[1] , as follows.

(a) az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam (ﷺ). When he learned of the murder of 'Uthmân, he said: May Allâh have mercy on 'Uthmân. Truly, to Allâh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return. It was said to him: The people are regretting it. He said: They planned it for a long time, but it is as Allâh says:

﴿وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ كَمَا فُعِلَ بِأَشْيَاعِهِم مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا فِي شَكٍّ مُّرِيبٍ﴾

"And a barrier will be set between them and that which they desire [i.e. At-Tawbah (turning to Allâh in repentance) and the accepting of Faith], as was done in the past with the people of their kind. Verily, they have been in grave doubt" (*Saba'* 34:54).

(b) Talhah ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh (ﷺ). When he learned of the murder of 'Uthmân, he said: May Allâh have mercy on 'Uthmân. Truly, to Allâh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return. It was said to him: The people are regretting it. He said: May they perish! And he recited the words of Allâh:

﴿مَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ۝ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ﴾

"They await only but a single Sayhah (shout) which will seize them while they are disputing! Then they will not be able to make bequest, nor they will return to their family" (*Ya-Seen* 36:49, 50).

(c) 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ). When he learned of the murder of 'Uthmân, he said: May Allâh have mercy on 'Uthmân. Truly,

[1] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen* by al-Khaalidi, p. 190; *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/197

to Allâh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return. It was said to him: The people are regretting it. He recited the verse:

﴿كَمَثَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ ٱكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ○ فَكَانَ عَٰقِبَتَهُمَآ أَنَّهُمَا فِى ٱلنَّارِ خَٰلِدَيْنِ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا۟ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ﴾

"(Their allies deceived them) like Shaytaan (Satan), when he says to man : 'Disbelieve in Allâh.' But when (man) disbelieves in Allâh, Shaytaan (Satan) says : 'I am free of you, I fear Allâh, the Lord of the 'Aalameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists)!' So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zaalimoon (i.e. polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers in Allâh and in His Oneness)" (Al-Hashr 59:16, 17).

(d) Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqaas (ﷺ). When Sa'd learned of that he said: May Allâh have mercy on 'Uthmân. Then he recited the verse:

﴿قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَٰلًا ○ ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ○ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَآئِهِۦ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَزْنًا ○ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ بِمَا كَفَرُوا۟ وَٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِى وَرُسُلِى هُزُوًا﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) : 'Shall We tell you the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds?. 'Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds. 'They are those who deny the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of their Lord and the Meeting with Him (in the Hereafter). So their works are in vain, and on the Day of Resurrection, We shall assign no weight for them. 'That shall be their recompense, Hell; because they disbelieved and took My Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses,

lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and My Messengers by way of jest and mockery'" (*Al-Kahf* 18:103-106).

Then Sa'd said: O Allâh, make them regret it and make them grieve, humiliate them then seize them.[1] And Allâh answered the prayer of Sa'd - who was a man whose prayers were answered - and He seized everyone who had taken part in the murder of 'Uthmân, such as 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba', al-Ghaafiqi, al-Ashtar, Hakeem ibn Jablah and Kinaanah al-Tajeebi, as they were all killed later on.[2]

The date of his murder, his age when he was martyred, his funeral and burial

The date of his murder

There is virtual consensus among historians as to the date of 'Uthmân's murder. There is no dispute that it took place in 35 AH, apart from the report narrated from Mus'ab ibn 'Abd-Allâh which says that it happened in 36 AH.[3] This is an odd view which differs from the consensus. Those who were of the first view are a large number, including 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr ibn 'Uthmân, 'Aamir ibn Shurahbeel al-Sha'bi, Naafi' the freed slave of Ibn 'Umar, Makhramah ibn Sulaymaan and many others.[4] The historians did not differ concerning the month in which he was killed, which was Dhu'l-Hijjah. But after that, they differed as to the day and hour. Of the many scholarly points of view, it seems most likely to me is that he was martyred on the 18th of Dhu'l-Hijjah 35 AH.[5] As for the particular day of the week on which he was killed, there are three views; the one which seems most likely to me is the view of the majority, which is

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/407, 408; *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 7/189

[2] *al-Khulafa' al-Raashidoon* by al-Khaalidi, p. 192

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/435, 436

[4] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/193, 194

[5] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* 5/435

that it was a Friday, because there is no stronger view that contradicts the view of the majority.[1] The time of his killing was the morning. This is the view of the majority and there is no stronger view that contradicts this majority view.[2]

His age when he was martyred

There are conflicting reports about his age when he was martyred, and this is an old dispute. At-Tabari (ﷺ) said: The early generation before us differed as to how old he was.[3] I am inclined to think that he was eighty-two (82) years old when he died. This is the view of the majority and is more likely to be correct for a number of reasons, including the following:

(a) This is the result of comparing the year of his birth with the year of his martyrdom. He was born in the sixth year after the Year of the Elephant, and he was martyred in 35 AH. Subtracting the date of his birth from the date of his martyrdom shows us his age at the time he was martyred.

(b) It is the view of the majority and is not contradicted by any stronger view.

His funeral and burial

On the day that he was killed, a number of the *Sahâbah* washed him, shrouded him and carried him, including Hakeem ibn Hizaam, Huwaytib ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza, Abu'l-Jahm ibn Hudhayfah, Niyaar ibn Makram al-Aslami, Jubayr ibn Mut'im, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam, 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, and a number of his companions and womenfolk, including his two wives Naa'ilah and Umm al-Baneen bint 'Utbah ibn Husayn, and two boys. Jubayr ibn Mut'im offered the funeral prayer for him, or it was said that this was done by

[1] op. cit., 5/436

[2] op. cit., 5/437

[3] op. cit., 5/438

az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam, Hakeem ibn Hizaam, Marwaan ibn al-Hakam or al-Miswar ibn Makhramah.[1] What seems most likely in my view is that the one who offered the funeral prayer for him was az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam, because of the report narrated by Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad*. This report states that az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam (ﷺ) offered the funeral prayer for 'Uthmân and buried him, and that was in accordance with 'Uthmân's wishes.[2] He was buried at night; this is supported by the report narrated by Ibn Sa'd and al-Dhahabi, as they said that he was buried between Maghrib and 'Isha'.[3] As for the report narrated by al-Tabaraani via 'Abd al-Malik ibn al-Maajashoon who said: I heard Maalik say: 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was killed and was left thrown on the garbage heap of Banu Fulaan for three days[4], the isnaad of this report is weak *(da'eef)* and its text is false. Its *isnaad* has two faults:

(a) The weakness of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Maajashoon who used to narrate munkar *(weird)* reports from Imam Maalik.

(b) This report is *mursal*, because Imam Maalik was not alive at the time of the murder of 'Uthmân (ﷺ), as he was not born until 93 AH.[5]

As for the text of this report, it is false. Ibn Hazm said concerning it: Whoever says that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was left thrown on a trash heap for three days is lying. This is the fabrication of one who has no shame. The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) ordered that the bodies of the *kuffaar* who had been slain at Badr be thrown into a dry well, and he threw dirt on top of them even though they were the worst of

[1] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/199

[2] *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Hadeethiyyah*, *Musnad* al-Imam Ahmad, 1/555. The men of its *isnâd* are thiqaat (trustworthy), but it is munqati'.

[3] *Al-Tabaqaat*, 3/78; *Tareekh al-Islam ('Ahd al-Khulafa')*, p. 481

[4] *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer*, 1/78; *Istishhaad 'Uthmân*, p. 194

[5] *al-Tahdheeb* by Ibn Hajar, 6/408

Allâh's creation. And he ordered that ditches be dug for the slain Jews of Qurayzah, who were the worst of those who are buried in the ground. Burying believers and disbelievers alike is obligatory for the Muslims. So how could anyone who has any sense of shame claim that 'Ali, who was the most prominent figure and those of the *Sahâbah* who were in Madînah, would leave a dead man on a garbage heap for three days without burying him?[1]

It would not occur to any man of sound reason who is free from Raafidi influences that they would leave their leader like that without burying him for three days, no matter how strong those evildoers were who had come to besiege him and kill him. The *Sahâbah*, as their Lord described them, strove in the way of Allâh and did not fear the blame of the blamers (al-Maa'idah 5:54). Rather these reports are fabrications which were inserted into the history books by the Raafidis.[2]

The innocence of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr (ﷺ) with regard to the murder of 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

The one who killed 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was an Egyptian man. The reports do not clearly state his name, but they say that he was originally from the tribe of Sadoos and was black skinned. He was nicknamed Jabalah because of the blackness of his skin, and he was also known as al-Mawt al-Aswad (the Black Death). Muhibb al-Deen al-Khateeb was of the view that the killer was 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' himself, as he said: It is proven that Ibn Saba' was with the Egyptian rebels when they came from al-Fustaat to Madînah, and in all similar events he was keen to work behind the scenes. Perhaps al-Mawt al-Aswad was a nickname that he wanted to hide behind in order to continue his plots to destroy Islam.[3] What supports this is the fact that Ibn Saba' was also black

[1] *al-Fasl*, 4/239, 240

[2] *'Aqeedat Ahl al-Sunnah*, 3/1091

[3] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, quoted from *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/207

skinned. It is narrated in a saheeh report that 'Ali described him as evil and black skinned.[1]

As for the accusation that Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr killed 'Uthmân with his arrow head, this is false. There are weak reports which mention that, as well as texts which are regarded as odd because they contradict the saheeh report which states that the killer was an Egyptian man.[2] Dr. Yahya al-Yahya lists a number of reasons why Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr is innocent in the murder of 'Uthmân, including the following:

(a) 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) went out to Basra to demand retaliation for the killing of 'Uthmân. If her brother had been one of them she would not have grieved for him when he was killed later on. We will discuss that in detail when we speak of 'Ali ibn Taalib (ﷺ) *in sha Allâh*.

(b) 'Ali (ﷺ) cursed the killers of 'Uthmân and disavowed them, which implies that he did not let them become close to him and did not appoint them to any position. But he appointed Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr as governor of Egypt. If Muhammad had been one of them, 'Ali would not have done that.

(c) The report narrated by Ibn 'Asaakir with his *isnaad* from Muhammad ibn Talhah ibn Musarrif who said: I heard Kinaanah the freed slave of Safiyyah bint Huyayy say: I was present when 'Uthmân was killed and I was fourteen years old (at that time). She said: Was Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr involved in his killing at all? He said: Allâh forbid. He entered upon him and 'Uthmân said: O son of my brother, you cannot be the one who kills me; then he went out, and he was not involved in his killing at all.[3]

This is supported by the report narrated by Khaleefah ibn

[1] *Lisaan al-Mizaan*, 3/290

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/209

[3] *Marwiyaat Abi Makhnaf fi Tareekh at-Tabari*, p. 243

Khayyaat and al-Tabari with *isnaads* whose men are trustworthy, from al-Hasan al-Basri - who was one of those who were present on the day of the siege[1] - which says that Ibn Abi Bakr took hold of 'Uthmân's beard and 'Uthmân said: You are holding me in a way that your father would not do. Then he went out and left him.[2]

Thus it is clear that Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr was innocent in the murder of 'Uthmân, just as the wolf was innocent of the blood of Yoosuf. It is also clear that the reason for this accusation was that he had entered upon him before the murder took place.[3] Ibn Katheer (ﷺ) stated that when 'Uthmân (ﷺ) spoke to him, he felt ashamed and went back, and he regretted his actions and covered his face, and he tried to defend him, but to no avail.[4]

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] op. cit., p. 244; *Tahdheeb al-Kamaal*, 6/97

[2] *Marwiyaat Abi Makhnaf*, p. 244

[3] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân*, 1/209

[4] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/193

Attitude of the *Sahâbah* towards the murder of 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

Some history books have distorted the attitude of the *Sahâbah* towards the murder of 'Uthmân. That is due to the Raafidi reports that are quoted by many historians. The one who studies the events of the turmoil mentioned in *Tareekh al-Tabari* and other books of history through the reports of Abu Makhnaf, al-Waaqidi, Ibn A'tham and other narrators may get the impression that the *Sahâbah* were the ones who were behind the conspiracy and provoking turmoil. Abu Makhnaf had Shi'i inclinations and did not refrain from accusing 'Uthmân of being the caliph who made so many mistakes that he deserved what he got. In his reports, Talhah appears as one of those who rebelled against 'Uthmân and incited the people against him. The reports of al-Waaqidi are no different from those of Abu Makhnaf, as they suggest that 'Amr ibn al-'Aas came to Madînah and started to criticize 'Uthmân. There are many Raafidi reports which accuse the *Sahâbah* of conspiring against 'Uthmân (ﷺ) and say that they are the ones who stirred up turmoil and incited the people. These are all lies and fabrications.[1]

In contrast to the fabricated and weak Raafidi reports, the

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah* (2/14-18)

books of the *Muhadditheen* (scholars of *hadeeth*) have, praise be to Allâh, preserved for us the *saheeh* reports which show the *Sahâbah* as supporting and defending 'Uthmân, as having nothing to do with his murder and seeking vengeance for him after he was killed. Thus it is very far-fetched to imagine that they would have anything to do with stirring up turmoil or provoking it.[1]

The *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) are all innocent of shedding the blood of 'Uthmân. If anyone says otherwise, his words are false and no evidence can be presented that reaches the level of being saheeh. Hence Khaleefah narrated in his *Tareekh* from 'Abd al-A'la ibn al-Haytham that his father said: I said to al-Hasan: Was there anyone of the *Muhâjirîn* or *Ansâr* among those who killed 'Uthmân? He said: No, they were thugs from Egypt. Imam al-Nawawi said: None of the *Sahâbah* took part in his killing; rather he was killed by thugs and hooligans from the vile, low-class dregs of the tribes. They ganged up against him and came from Egypt, and the *Sahâbah* who were there were unable to ward them off, so they besieged him until they killed him.[2]

Al-Zubayr described them as thugs from the regions. 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) described them as the dregs of the tribes.[3] Ibn Sa'd described them as the scum of the people who were united in evil.[4] Ibn Taymiyah described them as evil rebels and transgressors who had gone astray.[5] Al-Dhahabi described them as the essence of evil and cruelty.[6] Ibn al-'Imaad al-Hanbali described them in *al-Shadharaat* as evil people from the trash of the tribes.[7]

These descriptions are borne out by the conduct of these thugs from the time they began the siege until they killed the

[1] op. cit., 2/18

[2] *Shaheed al-Daar 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan* by Ahmad al-Khuroof, p. 148

[3] *Sharh al-Nawawi 'ala Saheeh Muslim*, 5/148, *Kitaab Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah*

[4] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/481; *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa'd*, 3/71

[5] *Minhaaj al-Sunnah*, 3/189-206

[6] *Duwal al-Islam* by al-Dhahabi, 1/12

[7] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/482; *Shadharaat al-Dhahab*, 1/40

caliph (ﷺ) unlawfully. How could they withhold food and water from him when he was the one who had often paid from his own pocket to supply water to the Muslims for free[1] and he was the one who had had spent a great deal of money on the people at times of famine or calamity?[2] 'Ali mentioned this when he was rebuking the besiegers and told them: O people, what you are doing is nothing like the deeds of the believers or the disbelievers. Do not withhold water or food from this man, for even the Byzantines and Persians, when they take prisoners, give them food and water.[3] The saheeh reports and the events of history confirm that the *Sahâbah* are innocent of inciting people against 'Uthmân or taking any part in the turmoil against him.[4] There follow comments of the *Sahâbah* which show that they are innocent of shedding the blood of 'Uthmân.

Praise of *Ahl al-Bayt* for 'Uthmân ﷺ and their innocence of shedding his blood

The attitude of 'Aa'ishah the Mother of the Believers (ﷺ)

(a) It was narrated from Faatimah bint 'Abd al-Rahmaan al-Yashkuriyyah from her mother that she asked 'Aa'ishah, at the request of her paternal uncle, saying: One of your sons sends you greetings of *salaam* and is asking you about 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, as the people are talking a great deal about him. She said: Whoever curses 'Uthmân, may Allâh curse him. By Allâh, he was sitting with the Prophet of Allâh, and the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) was leaning his back against me, and Jibreel (A) was revealing Qur'ân to him, and he was saying, "Write, 'Uthmân." By Allâh, he would not have

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/482; *al-Bukhaari*, *Kitaab Manaaqib 'Uthmân*, 4/202

[2] *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayaan*, p. 242

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/400

[4] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 2/18

reached such a status unless he was dear to Allâh and His Messenger.[1]

(b) It was narrated from Masrooq that 'Aa'ishah said, when 'Uthmân was killed: You left him like a clean garment, then you decided to slaughter him like a ram. Masrooq said to her: This is your doing; you wrote to the people telling them to rebel against him. 'Aa'ishah said: No, by the One in Whom the believers believe and the disbelievers disbelieve. I have never written anything to them up till now.[2] We have already seen how the Saba'is told lies and wrote letters to the people of the regions that they fabricated and falsely attributed to 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ).

(c) When she heard of the death of 'Uthmân on her way back from Makkah to Madînah, she went back to Makkah and entered al-Masjid al-Haraam, and she went and hid behind the Hijr, and the people gathered around her. She said: O people, the thugs from the various regions and the slaves of Made enah got together because some thugs criticized this one who has been slain for being wise and smart and for appointing those who were young, even though people of the same age had been appointed before him. (And they criticized him) for increasing the area of the grazing lands, although that had been done before and there was no alternative. 'Uthmân debated with them and explained to them, but when they could find no excuse they got upset and hastened to attack him, so their actions proved to be different from their words. They shed haraam blood and violated the sanctity of the holy land, they took haraam wealth and violated the sacred month. By Allâh, one finger of 'Uthmân is better than an earthful of people like them. Protect

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 1/378; *al-Musnad,* 6/205-261; *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 7/219

[2] *Fitnat Maqtal 'Uthmân,* 1/391; *Tareekh Khaleefah,* p. 176. Its *isnâd* to 'Aa'ishah is *saheeh.*

> yourselves by going after them so as to make an example of them for others. By Allâh, if there was any wrongdoing on 'Uthmân's part that led them to kill him, that wrongdoing could be taken away from him like dross from gold or like dirt from a garment when it is washed.[1]

In contrast to the good picture that may be drawn from these sound reports of the relationship between the Mother of the Believers 'Aa'ishah and 'Uthmân, there are still other reports narrated by al-Tabari and others which depict the relationship between 'Aa'ishah and 'Uthmân as contrary to what we have seen, and they distort the image of the positive role that she played in defending the sacred limits of Allâh and defending 'Uthmân (ﷺ), and her understanding of the games played by the Saba'is.[2]

The reports that were narrated in *al-'Aqd al-Fareed, al-Aghaani, Tareekh al-Ya'qoobi. Tareekh al-Mas'oodi* and *Ansaab al-Ashraaf* and the conclusions they reached concerning the political role played by 'Aa'ishah during the era of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, may lead one to criticize the political stance taken by 'Aa'ishah, but they are not to be relied on because they contradict the saheeh reports and because they are based on weak reports.[3] Most of the reports have no isnaad and those that do have isnaads have faulty isnaads so they cannot be taken as evidence. This is in addition to the fact that their texts are corrupt when compared to other reports that are more sound and closer to the truth.[4] Asma' Muhammad Ahmad Ziyaadah has undertaken a study of the *isnaads* and texts of the reports which speak of the political role played by 'Aa'ishah in the events of the turmoil, and she criticized the reports which speak of a difference of political opinion between 'Aa'ishah and 'Uthmân, as narrated by *at-Tabari* and

---

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari*, 5/473, 474

[2] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi fi 'Ahd al-Nabi wa'l-Khulafa' al-Raashideen*, p. 352

[3] See also concerning these false conclusions: *al-Siddeeqah bint al-Siddeeq* by al-'Aqqaad, p. 116-124

[4] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi*, p. 370

others, and she demonstrated that they are false. Then she said: It would be more appropriate for us to ignore all of these reports - as mentioned above - because they have not reached us through proper channels, rather the way in which they have reached us is via narrators who are accused of being Shi'is, liars and Raafidis. But we examined them because they are widely known in most modern studies, and in order to prove that they are worthless reports. These reports - as is clear to us - try to create a history that never happened at all, of conflict and enmity between 'Uthmân and 'Aa'ishah, and between 'Uthmân and all the *Sahâbah*.[1] If it is proven that 'Aa'ishah agreed with the rebels to incite the people against 'Uthmân (ﷺ), one would expect her to give some justification to the rebels, but there are no sound reports at all to that effect. If any of these reports which speak of 'Aa'ishah's attitude towards the killing of 'Uthmân were sound, they would take away the credibility of 'Aa'ishah (ﷺ) and the *Sahâbah* who took the same stance as her. This is something that we cannot accept because of the true texts from Allâh and His Messenger which confirm their credibility, which on its own would be sufficient to refute these reports. But we have examined these reports just to confirm that they are worthless and that all conclusions based on them are worthless, so that all evidence based on religious texts and scientific and historical evidence comes together and supports one another.[2]

'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ)

'Ali (ﷺ) and the *Ahl al-Bayt* respected 'Uthmân and acknowledged his rights.

(a) The first one to swear allegiance to 'Uthmân after 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn 'Awf was 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib.[3] It was narrated that Qays ibn 'Abbaad said: I heard 'Ali say, when

[1] op. cit., p. 370

[2] *Dawr al-Mar'ah al-Siyaasi*, p. 371

[3] *al-Bukhaari, Kitaab Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah*, no. 3700

'Uthmân (ﷺ) was mentioned: He is a man of whom the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) said:

«أَلَا أَسْتَحْيِي مِمَّنْ تَسْتَحْيِي مِنْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ»

"Should I not feel shy before the one before whom the angels feel shy?"[1]

(b) He testified that he had been given glad tidings of Paradise. It was narrated that al-Nazzaal ibn Saburah said: I asked 'Ali about 'Uthmân and he said: He is a man who is called *Dhu'n-Noorayn* by the exalted assembly (angels). He was the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and was married to two of his daughters, and he was guaranteed a house in Paradise.[2]

(c) 'Ali (ﷺ) was obedient to 'Uthmân and acknowledged his position as leader and caliph, and he did not disobey any command. Ibn Abi Shaybah narrated with his isnaad from Ibn al-Hanafiyyah that 'Ali said: If 'Uthmân told me to march to Siraar, I would hear and obey.[3] This is indicative of the extent of his willingness to follow and obey 'Uthmân (may Allâh be pleased with them both).[4]

(d) When 'Uthmân united the people in reading one recitation of the Qur'ân, after consulting the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) and reaching consensus on that, 'Ali (ﷺ) said: If I were in his position I would have done the same as he has done.[5]

(e) Hence 'Ali (ﷺ) denounced the killing of 'Uthmân and declared his innocence of shedding his blood. He swore

---

[1] *Muslim, Kitaab Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah,* no. 2401 (Al-Hakim 3/95)

[2] *al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-Bayt bayna al-Ifraat wa'l-Tafreet,* p. 227; *al-Mukhtasar min Kitaab al-Muwaafaqah bayna Ahl al-Bayt wa'l-Sahâbah* by al-Zamakhshari - MS in the library of the Islamic Universality. This book has been printed by Dar al-Hadeeth.

[3] *al-Sunan* by al-Khallaal, 1/325, no. 416. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[4] *al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-Bayt bayna al-Ifraat wa'l-Tafreet,* p. 227

[5] *al-Sunan* by al-Bayhaqi, 2/42

oaths in his khutbahs and at other times stating that he did not kill him and that he did not order his killing or support it or approve of it. That has been proven from him in definitive reports[1], contrary to what the Raafidis claim, that he approved of the murder of 'Uthmân (ﷺ).[2] After mentioning some of the reports that speak of his murder, al-Haakim said: As for that which is claimed by some of the innovators, that the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib helped (in the killing of 'Uthmân), that is a lie and a fabrication. The *mutawaatir* reports say otherwise.[3] Ibn Taymiyah said: This is all a lie against 'Ali (ﷺ) and a fabrication against him. 'Ali (ﷺ) did not take part in the murder of 'Uthmân, nor did he order it or approve of it. That was narrated from him and he was truthful and honest.[4] 'Ali said: O Allâh, I declare my innocence before You of shedding the blood of 'Uthmân.[5] Al-Haakim narrated with his *isnaad* from Qays ibn 'Abbaad that he said: I heard 'Ali on the day of the Camel saying: O Allâh, I declare my innocence before You of shedding the blood of 'Uthmân; I was beside myself with grief on the day when 'Uthmân was killed, and I felt very distressed when they came to swear allegiance to me. I said: By Allâh, I feel ashamed before Allâh to accept the allegiance of people who killed a man of whom the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) said:

«أَلَا أَسْتَحْيِي مِمَّنْ تَسْتَحْيِي مِنْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ»

"Should I not feel shy before the one before whom the angels feel shy?" [6]

---

[1] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 7/202

[2] *al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-bayt bayna al-Ifraat wa'l-Tafreet,* p. 229; Haqq al-Yaqeen by 'Abd-Allâh Shibr, p. 189

[3] *al-Mustadrak,* 3/103

[4] *Minhaaj al-Sunnah,* 4/406

[5] *al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-Bayt,* p. 230. Its *isnâd* is hasan.

[6] *Al-Hakim 3/95*

I feel ashamed before Allâh to accept allegiance when 'Uthmân is lying slain on the ground and has not yet been buried. So they went away, but when 'Uthmân had been buried, the people came back and asked me to accept their allegiance, and I said: By Allâh, I am worried about what to do. Then I decided to go ahead and accept their oaths of allegiance. When they said, O *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, it was as if it gave me a shock, and I said: O Allâh, take *(hasanaat)* from me and give them to 'Uthmân until You are pleased.[1]
Imam Ahmad narrated with his isnaad from Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah that he said: 'Ali heard that 'Aa'ishah was cursing the killers of 'Uthmân in al-Mirbad.[2] He raised his hands until they reached his face, then he said: And I also curse the killers of 'Uthmân; may Allâh curse them in the plains and in the mountains. He said it two or three times.[3]
Ibn Sa'd narrated with his isnaad from Ibn 'Abbaas that 'Ali said: By Allâh, I did not kill 'Uthmân and I did not order that he be killed, rather I tried to stop it. By Allâh, I did not kill 'Uthmân and I did not order that he be killed, but I was overpowered. He said it three times.[4] It was also narrated that he said: Whoever disavows the religion of 'Uthmân has disavowed faith. By Allâh, I did not help with his murder and I did not order it or approve of it.[5]

(f) And 'Ali said of 'Uthmân (ﷺ): He was the one among us who upheld ties of kinship the most, and he was the one who feared the Lord the most."[6]

---

[1] *Al-Mustadrak*, 3/95; a *saheeh* hadeeth according to the conditions of al-Bukhaari and Muslim, although they did not narrate it; and al-Dhahabi agreed with him.

[2] A place near Basra, approximately three miles away.

[3] *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah*, 1/555, no. 733, its *isnâd* is *saheeh*.

[4] *Al-Tabaqaat*, 3/82; *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/202

[5] *al-Riyaadh al-Nadrah*, p. 543

[6] *Sifat al-Safwah*, 1/306

(g) It was narrated that Abu 'Awn said: I heard Muhammad ibn Haatib say: I asked 'Ali about 'Uthmân and he said: He was one of those who believed and feared Allâh, then believed and feared Allâh. But he did not complete the verse. (Al-Maa'idah 5:93).[1]

(h) It was narrated that 'Umayrah ibn Sa'd said: We were with 'Ali on the banks of the Euphrates, when a ship passed by with its sails raised. 'Ali said: Allâh says:

﴿وَلَهُ ٱلْجَوَارِ ٱلْمُنشَـَٔاتُ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ كَٱلْأَعْلَـٰمِ﴾

"And His are the ships going and coming in the seas, like mountains" (*Ar-Rahmaan* 55:24).

By the One Who caused them to sail in one of His seas, I did not kill 'Uthmân and I did not support anyone in killing him.[2]

(i) Imam Ahmad narrated in his *Musnad* that Muhammad ibn Haatib said: I heard 'Ali say:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُم مِّنَّا ٱلْحُسْنَىٰٓ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ﴾

"Verily, those for whom the good has preceded from Us, they will be removed far therefrom (Hell)" (*Al-Anbiya'* 21:101)

- 'Uthmân is one of them.[3] And 'Ali said: I became ill on the day 'Uthmân was killed.[4] Al-Haafiz ibn 'Asaakir compiled all the reports from 'Ali (ﷺ) in which he declared his innocence of the murder of 'Uthmân. He would swear oaths to that effect in his khutbahs and on other occasions, swearing that he did not kill him or approve of that. This

---

[1] *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah,* 1/580. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[2] Op. cit., 1/559, 560. Its *isnâd* has corroborating evidence.

[3] op. cit., 1/580, no. 771. Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[4] *Al-Muntazam fi Tareekh al-Mulook wa'l-Umam,* 5/61

is proven from him in reports that are regarded as definitive by many of the imams of hadeeth.[1]

'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Abbaas (ﷺ)

Imam Ahmad narrated with his *isnaad* from Ibn 'Abbaas that he said: If all the people had gathered to kill 'Uthmân, they would have been stoned the way the people of Loot were stoned.[2] And he (ﷺ) said, praising 'Uthmân and condemning those who criticized him: May Allâh have mercy on Abu 'Amr. He was, by Allâh, the noblest and most righteous of men, who prayed a great deal at the time before dawn, shed many tears when he remembered the Fire, the first to do righteous deeds and to offer help at the time of calamity, beloved, confident and loyal, the one who equipped the army of Tabook, the son-in-law of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ). May Allâh punish those who curse him with the curse of those who curse until the Day of Judgement.[3]

Zayd ibn 'Ali (ﷺ)

Ibn 'Asaakir narrated with his *isnaad* from al-Saddi that he said: I came to him - i.e., Zayd - when he was in Baariq, one of the quarters of Kufah, and I said to him: You are our leader and are in charge of our affairs. What do you say about Abu Bakr and 'Umar? He said: You should love them. And he used to say that disavowing Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân was disavowing 'Ali, and that disavowing 'Ali was disavowing Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân.[4]

'Ali ibn al-Husayn (ﷺ)

It is proven that 'Ali ibn al-Husayn disavowed the Raafidi

[1] *al-Bidaayah wa'l-Nihaayah*, 7/193

[2] *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah*, 1/563, no. 746.

[3] *Al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-Bayt*, p. 234; *Murooj al-Dhahab* by al-Mas'oodi, 3/64

[4] *al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-Bayt*, p. 335; *Tahdheeb Tareekh Dimashq*, 6/21

view about Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân (﷛). Abu Nu'aym narrated with his *isnaad* from Muhammad ibn 'Ali that his father 'Ali ibn al-Husayn said: Some people of Iraq sat together and spoke of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and they criticized them, then they started criticizing 'Uthmân. He said to them: Tell me, are you among the first *Muhâjirîn*

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَـٰرِهِمْ وَأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَرِضْوَٰنًا وَيَنصُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ﴾

"who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allâh and to please Him, and helping Allâh (i.e. helping His religion - Islamic Monotheism) and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)" (*Al-Hashr* 59:8)?

They said: No. he said: Are you among those who

﴿تَبَوَّءُو ٱلدَّارَ وَٱلْإِيمَـٰنَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ﴾

"Before them, had homes (in Al-Madînah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them" (*Al-Hashr* 59:9)?

They said: No. He said to them: You have confirmed and testified against yourselves that you are neither from this group nor that, and I bear witness against you that you are not of the third group of whom Allâh says:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ جَآءُو مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَٰنِنَا ٱلَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِٱلْإِيمَـٰنِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِى قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟﴾

"And those who came after them say: "Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed" (*Al-Hashr* 59:10)

Go away and leave me; may Allâh not bless you and may He

keep you away from us. You are mocking Islam and you are not of its followers.[1]

The attitude of 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir (ﷺ)

In the historical reports that may contain sound or fabricated material, it says that there had been a dispute between 'Ammaar and 'Uthmân. Some of these reports have *isnaads* and some have no *isnaad* at all. I have not come across anyone who examined and analyzed these reports except a few, therefore it is not possible to leave these reports, which undermine the dignity of the *Sahâbah* without examining them.[2]

The beating of 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir

The reports which speak of 'Uthmân's beating 'Ammaar are regarded as the most famous and numerous of these reports (which undermine the dignity of the *Sahâbah*). The fabricators of these reports mentioned the different methods supposedly used by 'Uthmân (ﷺ) in beating 'Ammaar and the different consequences that followed, but in addition to their *isnaads* being corrupt, the texts themselves are weird and incredible.[3] Al-Qaadi Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi says in *al-'Awaasim,* when discussing the lies that are attributed to 'Uthmân (ﷺ): With regard to his beating Ibn Mas'ood and withholding his stipend, this is false, and his beating of 'Ammaar is also a fabrication. If he had disembowelled him he would not have lived at all. Some scholars tried to find an acceptable way of interpreting this report, but no attention should have been paid to it in the first place, because it is all false and no truth can be based on falsehood. We should not go along with the ignorant because it is a waste of time.[4] 'Uthmân's age, faith, modesty, gentleness, kindness, soft nature, seniority in

[1] *al-'Aqeedah fi Ahl al-Bayt,* p. 236; *al-Bidayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 9/112; *al-Jaami' li Ahkaam al-Qur'*aan, 18/31, 32

[2] *'Ammaar ibn Yaasir,* by Usaamah Ahmad Sultaan, p. 122

[3] *'Ammaar ibn Yaasir,* by Usaamah Ahmad Sultaan, p. 122

[4] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qaw*aasim, p. 82-84

Islam and status all put him far above sinking to this level in attitude towards a man who was one of the most senior of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), whose seniority and virtue 'Uthmân recognized despite the differences in opinion that arose between them. Would 'Uthmân be able to do that when he was insisting that the people should not fight to defend him and was content to die, patiently seeking reward and to protect Muslim blood from being shed and prevent widespread turmoil? Would he accept to do to 'Ammaar - when he was well aware of his seniority and virtue in Islam - what is mentioned in the false reports, namely ordering his slaves to beat him until he lost consciousness, then stepping on his stomach when he was in that state? Would the character and modesty of 'Uthmân allow him to demonstrate the *Jaahili* attitude of insulting 'Ammaar by slandering his mother Sumayyah, who was one of the earliest Muslims and a woman of great virtue, when 'Uthmân knew of the honour that accrued to 'Ammaar by virtue of his being the son of his mother Sumayyah (ﷺ), the first martyr in Islam?

No, this is not true at all, because in the sound reports there is no indication at all that 'Uthmân could sink to such a low level in rebuking and disciplining. Moreover, his attitude, nature and character make that very unlikely. There is no doubt that examining these fabricated reports against what is known of the attitude and character of these prominent figures, and taking into account the standards of the era, is the best way to expose the fabrication and the fabricators.[1]

Accusation against 'Ammaar of taking part in the turmoil and stirring up trouble against 'Uthmân

In attributing these fabrications to 'Ammaar (ﷺ), the historians relied on reports none of which were free of weakness in their *isnaads* or texts. Different accusations were levelled against 'Ammaar (ﷺ) about his stirring up turmoil,

---

[1] *al-Khaleefah al-Muftara 'alayhi 'Uthmân ibn 'Affaan*, p. 14-41; *'Ammaar ibn Yaasir*, p. 137

inciting people against 'Uthmân and inciting them to rebel against him. Some of these reports say that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) sent word to him in Egypt to find out what was happening with regard to what they had heard about the people rebelling, and that the Saba'is had managed to influence 'Ammaar. The isnaad of this report, which was narrated by al-Tabari[1], includes Shu'ayb ibn Ibraaheem al-Tameemi al-Kufi, the narrator of the books of Sayf, about whom there is some ambiguity. Al-Raawi said concerning him: He is not known, although he has some ahaadeeth and reports in which there is some weirdness and they contain a lot of bias against the salaf.[2] It was also narrated by 'Umar ibn Shabbah in *Tareekh al-Madînah,* where its *isnaad* includes the Shaykh of 'Umar, 'Ali ibn 'Aasim, of whom Ibn al-Madeeni said: 'Ali ibn 'Aasim made a lot of mistakes, and when corrected, he would not retract. He was known for narrating *hadeeth* and he narrated weird *ahaadeeth.*[3] Yahya ibn Ma'een said: He is worthless.[4] And on one occasion he said: He is a liar and worthless.[5] Al-Nasaa'i said: His hadeeth is to be ignored.[6] Al-Bukhaari said: He is not sound according to them, and they criticized him.[7] And there were some who tried to be tactful about him. Ibn Hajar said concerning him: He is *sadooq* but he makes mistakes and insists on them, and he was accused of being a Shi'i.[8] A report whose *isnaad* is like this cannot be easily accepted, especially when it is known that 'Ammaar was a pious man whose piety would prevent him from indulging in such things. We do not know of anyone who would indulge in such dirty work except a hate-filled Saba'i Jew. Allâh forbid that a Sahaabi, one of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), could sink to

[1] *Tareekh at-Tabari, 5/348*

[2] *Istishhaad 'Uthmân wa Waq'ah al-Jamal,* p. 30

[3] *Siyar A'laam an-Nubala',* 9/253

[4] op. cit., 9/255

[5] op. cit., 9/257

[6] op. cit., 9/255

[7] op. cit., 9/255

[8] *Taqreeb al-Tahdheeb,* p. 403

such a low level. Khaalid al-Ghayth says: This report contradicts what has been proven of the dignity of the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ), in addition to the fact that it was not narrated via any sound *isnaad*.[1]

Among the false reports that have been narrated concerning this matter is that which was attributed to Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab, in which it says that the *Sahâbah* in general were upset with 'Uthmân (ﷺ) in addition to others who were also upset, and they got angry with him, especially Abu Dharr, Ibn Mas'ood and 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir (ﷺ).[2] The problem with this report is that it contains a kind of deception (*tadlees*) that cannot be approved or overlooked, because the name of a narrator who is accused of fabricating and telling lies was dropped from the *isnaad*, namely Isma'eel ibn Yahya ibn 'Ubayd-Allâh. Hence the scholars of hadeeth determined that this report is weak and stated that it is a false report, when they discussed the biography of Muhammad ibn 'Eesa ibn Samee', the one who narrated this report from Ibn Abi Dhi'b. Imam al-Bukhaari said concerning Ibn Samee': It was said that he did not hear this hadeeth from Ibn Abi Dhi'b, meaning this hadeeth from al-Zuhri about the murder of 'Uthmân. Ibn Hibbaan said: Ibn Samee' did not hear this hadeeth from Ibn Abi Dhi'b, rather he heard it from Ismaa'eel ibn Yahya, so he resorted to *tadlees* (deception) [by dropping the name of Ismaa'eel]. Al-Haakim said: Abu Muhammad - meaning Ibn Samee' - narrated a weird *(munkar)* hadeeth from Ibn Abi Dhi'b, which is the hadeeth about the murder of 'Uthmân. It was said in his book: From Ismaa'eel ibn Yahya from Ibn Abi Dhi'b, but he dropped the name of Ismaa'eel ibn Yahya, and Ismaa'eel is worthless when it comes to hadeeth.[3] Dr Yoosuf al-'Ishsh said: The report that is attributed to Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab must be ignored, because upon examination it is obviously fabricated. Al-

[1] *Istishhaad 'Uthmân wa Waq'at al-Jamal*, p. 86

[2] *Tareekh Dimashq*, 39/415; *'Ammaar ibn Yaasir*, p. 144

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 2/16-18; *at-Tareekh al-Kabeer* by al-Bukhaari, 1/203; *al-Tahdheeb*, 9/391; *Tahdheeb al-Tahdheeb*, 9/392

Haakim al-Nisaboori stated that one of the men in its *isnaad* dropped the name of another man who was worthless, and it is odd (munkar). The fact of the matter is that this report does not show any of the respect that Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab showed to the *Sahâbah* in his other, sound reports.[1]

'Ammaar's innocence of the murder of 'Uthmân (ﷺ)

The report about Masrooq and Abu Moosa (ﷺ) accusing 'Ammaar of that when he came with al-Hasan to incite the people of Kufah is regarded as weak because of Shu'ayb, who is unknown, and Sayf who is very weak. The report in *Saheeh al-Bukhaari* does not say anything about that, so this extra material cannot be accepted, especially since it casts aspersions upon a Sahaabi such as 'Ammaar ibn Yaasir, whom the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed would be protected against the Shaytaan[2] and who was filled to the brim with faith.[3]

The scholars explained that this accusation, which is not limited only to 'Ammaar but also included other *Sahâbah*, is false. Ibn Katheer said: As for what was said by some people, that some of the *Sahâbah* let 'Uthmân down and were pleased when he was killed, this is not narrated in any sound report from any of the *Sahâbah*, rather all of them objected to it and cursed the ones who did it.[4] al-Qaadi Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi said: This is the best that was narrated concerning this issue, thus it becomes clear - and in order to reach the right conclusion we must follow the people of truth - that none of the *Sahâbah* ever incited anyone against 'Uthmân or forsook him. If 'Uthmân had sought the help of others, one thousand or four thousand strangers would not have been able to overwhelm twenty thousand or more locals, but he let himself into this calamity.[5] And he said: The evildoers and the ignorant started saying that the virtuous *Sahâbah* had caused

[1] *al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah*, 39.
[2] Al-Bukhaari, no. 3743
[3] *'Ammaar ibn Yaasir*, p. 147
[4] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah*, 7/207
[5] *al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim*, p. 129

trouble to him and had incited people against him, and that they were pleased about what had happened to him. These evildoers and ignorant people fabricated in their books letters in which there was some eloquence and which were supposedly written by 'Uthmân, which show him seeking the support of 'Ali. But this is all a fabrication, aimed at damaging the image of the salaf and the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in the minds of the Muslims. The conclusion we may reach is that 'Uthmân was killed unlawfully and was accused with no evidence, and that all of the *Sahâbah* are innocent of shedding his blood, because they did what he wanted them to do and they fulfilled his wish to be left to face his fate.[1]

'Amr's innocence of the murder of 'Uthmân

When 'Uthmân was surrounded, 'Amr ibn al-'Aas left Madînah and headed for Syria. He said: By Allâh, O people of Madînah, no one will stay in Madînah until the time when this man is killed, but Allâh will humiliate him. Whoever cannot support him, let him flee. So he left and his two sons 'Abd-Allâh and Muhammad left with him. Hassaan ibn Thâbit left after him, and they were followed by others whom Allâh willed should go.[2] When the news of 'Uthmân's murder and the people's swearing allegiance to 'Ali came to him, 'Amr said: I am Abu 'Abd-Allâh (i.e., I know what is going on); there will be war and whoever takes part in it will make it worse. May Allâh have mercy on 'Uthmân and may Allâh be pleased with him and forgive him. Salaamah ibn Zanbaagh al-Judhaami said: O Arabs, there was a door between you and the Arabs; now set up a new door if the first door is broken. 'Amr said: That is what we want, a ruler who deals with the people on the basis of equality.

Then he started weeping and saying: O 'Uthmân, true modesty and religious commitment have departed with him, until he reached Damascus.[3]

[1] op. cit., p. 132

[2] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* quoting from *'Amr ibn al-'Aas* by al-Ghadbaan, p. 464

[3] *Tareekh at-Tabari,* quoting from *'Amr ibn al-'Aas* by al-Ghadbaan, p. 481

This is the true image of 'Amr (ﷺ), which is in harmony with his character, attitudes and closeness to 'Uthmân. As for the distorted image that was presented of him as an ambitious opportunist and seeker of worldly gains, this is a report which is weak and is to be rejected, the report of al-Waaqidi from Moosa ibn Ya'qoob.[1] A number of writers and historians were influenced by these weak reports, so they presented 'Amr in a very negative manner, such as that which was written by Mahmoud Sheet Khattaab[2] , 'Abd al-Khaaliq Sayyid Abu Raadiyah[3] and 'Abbaas Mahmoud al-'Aqqaad who refuses to look at the *isnaad* and thinks little of his readers' intelligence, and presents an image of Mu'âwiyah and 'Amr as opportunists and seekers of worldly gains. The fact that all the historical critics agreed that all the reports that he used to reach this conclusion are false means nothing to al-'Aqqaad. After quoting these weak reports on which no conclusion can be based, he said: Let the historical critics say what they like with regard to how true this debate was and how sound these words are and what is proven and not proven with regard to the *isnaad* and text. What we have no doubt about, even if all the books of history come together to reject it, is that the agreement between the two men was based on an agreement that each of them would have his share and would cooperate to attain the position of rulers and governors, otherwise there would be no deal at all.[4]

The true character of 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (ﷺ) was that he was a man of principle who left Madînah when he felt unable to defend 'Uthmân, and he wept bitterly for him when he was killed. He was one of the closest of his companions, friends and consultants and he was included in the shoora council at the time of 'Uthmân even though he was not the governor of any province. He went to Mu'âwiyah (ﷺ) to cooperate with him in fighting the murderers

[1] *'Amr ibn al-'Aas* by al-Ghadbaan, p. 481

[2] *Sufara' al-Nabi (ﷺ)* by Mahmoud Sheet Khattaab, p. 508

[3] *'Amr ibn al-'Aas* by 'Abd al-Khaaliq Sayyid Abu Raabiyah, p. 316

[4] *'Amr ibn al-'Aas* by al-'Aqqaad, p. 231, 232

of 'Uthmân and avenging the slain caliph.[1] The murder of 'Uthmân was sufficient to create anger in the hearts of both men against the criminals who had shed blood and they had no option but to select a place other than Madînah to take revenge on those who had violated the sanctity of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and slain his caliph in front of the people. What is so strange about 'Amr being angry for the sake of 'Uthmân? If anyone has any doubt about this matter, this doubt is based on false reports which depict 'Amr as a man whose main aim was power and authority.[2]

Comments of the *Sahâbah* about the *fitnah*

Anas ibn Maalik (ﷺ)

It was said to Anas ibn Maalik: No one can love both 'Ali and 'Uthmân. Anas said: They are lying. We love both of them.[3]

Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamaan (ﷺ)

It was narrated that Khaalid ibn al-Rabee' said: We heard that Hudhayfah was sick, so Abu Mas'ood al-Ansâri (ﷺ) went to him with a number of people in al-Madaa'in. Then mention was made of 'Uthmân's murder and he said: I was not present and I did not kill him or approve of that.[4] Ahmad ibn Hanbal narrated from Ibn Sireen that Hudhayfah said, when news of 'Uthmân's murder reached him: O Allâh, You know that I am innocent of the blood of 'Uthmân. Even if those who killed him did the right thing, I have nothing to do with them, and if they did the wrong thing, You know that I am innocent of his blood, and the Arabs will know that if his murder was the right thing things would improve and if it was the wrong thing there would be bloodshed. But all they got was bloodshed, and war and killing have not stopped

[1] *'Amr ibn al-'Aas* by al-Ghadbaan, p. 489, 490

[2] op. cit., p. 492

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 2/25; *al-Tahdheeb* by Ibn Hajar, 7/141

[4] op. cit., 2/27

since then.[1] Ibn 'Asaakir narrated from Jundub ibn 'Abd-Allâh - who met the Prophet (ﷺ) - that he met Hudhayfah and mentioned the case of the caliph 'Uthmân to him, and he said: They will kill him. He said: I said: Where will he be? He said: In Paradise. I said: Where will his killers be? He said: In Hell.[2]

Umm Sulaym al-Ansâriyyah (ﷺ)

Umm Sulaym al-Ansâriyyah (ﷺ) said, when she heard of the killing of 'Uthmân ﷺ; they will not get anything after this but bloodshed.[3]

Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ)

It was narrated that Abu Maryam said: I saw Abu Hurayrah on the day when 'Uthmân was killed, with two braids, and he was holding onto them and saying: By Allâh, 'Uthmân was killed unlawfully.[4]

Abu Bakrah (ﷺ)

Ibn Katheer narrated in *al-Bidaayah wa'l-Nihaayah* that Abu Bakrah (ﷺ) said: To be thrown from heaven to earth would be dearer to me than having any part in the murder of 'Uthmân.[5]

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ)

It was narrated from Abu 'Uthmân al-Nahdi that Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ) said: If the killing of 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was guided, then sincerity would have brought something good out of this action, but it was misguided so it brought bloodshed.[6]

Samurah ibn Jundub (ﷺ)

Ibn 'Asaakir narrated with his *isnaad* that Samurah ibn

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 2/28; *Tareekh Dimashq,* p. 388

[2] ibid.

[3] *al-Bidaayah wa'n-Nihaayah,* 7/195

[4] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 2/31; *Tareekh Dimashq,* p. 493

[5] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 2/31; *Tareekh Dimashq,* p. 493

[6] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* 4/1245

Jundub (ﷺ) said: Islam was in a strong fortress, but they breached this defence by killing 'Uthmân and damaged it in many places, and they will not be able to repair the gaps or fill them until the Day of Resurrection. The caliphate was among the people of Madînah but it was taken out and it is no longer among them.[1]

'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas (ﷺ)

Abu Nu'aym narrated in *Ma'rifat al-Sahâbah* with his isnaad that 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas said: 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân Dhu'n-Noorayn was killed unlawfully and he will be given a double reward.[2]

'Abd-Allâh ibn Salaam (ﷺ)

He (ﷺ) said: Do not kill 'Uthmân, for if you kill him you will never pray together again.[3] According to another report: By Allâh, you will not shed even a little of his ('Uthmân's) blood but that will push you further away from Allâh.[4]

al-Hasan ibn 'Ali (ﷺ)

It was narrated that Talq ibn Khashshaaf said: We went to Madînah and Qart ibn Khaythamah was with us. We met al-Hasan ibn 'Ali and Qart said to him: Why was the *ameer al-mu'mineen* 'Uthmân killed? He said: He was killed unlawfully.[5]

Salamah ibn al-Akwa' (ﷺ)

It was narrated that Yazeed ibn Abi 'Ubaydah said: When 'Uthmân was killed, Salamah ibn al-Akwa' - who had been present at Badr - left Madînah and headed for al-Ribdhah, and he stayed there until just before he died.[6]

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 2/31; *Tareekh Dimashq,* p. 493

[2] *Ma'rifat al-Sahabah,* 1/245; *al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer,* 1/46

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 2/34; *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah.* Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[4] *Al-Tabaqaat,* 3/81

[5] *Tareekh al-Madînah,* 4/145

[6] op. cit., 4/142

'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar (ﷺ)

It was narrated that Abu Haazim said: I was with 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb and he mentioned 'Uthmân and his virtues, his attributes and his relationship through marriage to the Prophet (ﷺ) so that he depicted him as purer than glass. Then he mentioned 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib and mentioned his virtues, his seniority in Islam and his relationship through marriage to the Prophet (ﷺ) until he depicted him as purer than glass. Then he said: Whoever wants to talk about these two, let him talk about them in this manner or else not speak at all.[1] Ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) also said: Do not revile 'Uthmân, for we used to regard him as one of the best of us.[2]

The effect of 'Uthmân's murder in creating further turmoil and division

The turmoil of 'Uthmân's murder was the cause of a great deal of further turmoil and it cast its shadow on the events that followed it. People's hearts changed and lying became widespread, and deviation from the laws and teachings of Islam began from that point.[3] The murder of 'Uthmân was one of the greatest causes of *fitnah* among people; because of it the ummah became divided and has remained so until today.[4] Hatred was created against one another and there were many calamities; evildoers prevailed and the righteous were humiliated, those who had previously been unable to create division now became active and those who loved good were unable to do good. They swore allegiance to 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ﷺ), who was the most entitled to become caliph at that point, and was the best of those who remained, but people were divided and the fire of *fitnah* had been lit. There was no unity and no discipline, and the caliph and the best of the ummah were not able to achieve

---

[1] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 1/379

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah,* 1/379; *Fadaa'il al-Sahâbah.* Its *isnâd* is *saheeh.*

[3] Op. cit., p. 590

[4] *Majmoo' al-Fataawa,* 25/162

all they wanted of goodness, and many people took part in spreading *fitnah* and division.[1]

The conquest movement grew gradually weaker in the last few years of 'Uthmân's caliphate, when the turmoil began in the Muslim lands and the centre of the caliphate. Then it ceased when 'Uthmân was killed. That continued to be the case, and there was even some loss of conquered lands, until the beginning of Mu'âwiyah's reign, when the Muslims' affairs stabilized and the conquests began in the east, west and north.[2]

Wronging and transgressing against others are causes of doom in this world and in the Hereafter

Wronging and transgressing against others unlawfully are causes of doom in this world and in the Hereafter, as Allâh says:

﴿وَتِلْكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ أَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا۟ وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِم مَّوْعِدًا﴾

"And these towns (population, 'Aad, Thamood) We destroyed them when they did wrong. And We appointed a fixed time for their destruction" (*Al-Kahf* 18:59).

The one who researches what happened to those who rebelled against 'Uthmân (ﷺ) and transgressed against him will find that Allâh did not give them respite rather He humiliated them and wreaked vengeance on them, and none was spared.[3]

Khaleefah ibn Khayyaat narrated in his *Tareekh* with a saheeh *isnaad* that 'Imraan ibn al-Hudayr said: 'Abd-Allâh ibn Shaqeeq told me that the first drop of 'Uthmân's blood fell on the words

﴿فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ﴾

"So Allâh will suffice for you against them" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:137),

As Abu Hurayth mentioned that he and Suhayl al-Numayri

[1] op. cit., 25/163

[2] *Ahdaath wa Ahaadeeth Fitnat al-Haraj*, p. 591

[3] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah fi'l-Fitnah*, 1/483

went and took out the *Mus-haf*, and the drop of blood on (the words)

﴿فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ﴾

"So Allâh will suffice for you against them" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:137)

is still in the *Mus-haf* and has not been erased. In *Tareekh Ibn 'Asaakir* it is narrated that Muhammad ibn Sireen said: I was circumambulating the Ka'bah and I saw a man saying: O Allâh, forgive me, but I don't think You will forgive me. I said: O slave of Allâh, I have never heard anyone saying what you are saying. He said: I promised Allâh that if I could slap 'Uthmân on the face I would do so. When he was killed and placed on the bier in the house, and the people were coming to pay their last respects, I entered as if I wanted to pay my last respects, and I found myself alone with him. I lifted the cloth from his face and slapped his face, then I covered him again. Now my right arm is paralyzed. Muhammad ibn Sireen said: I saw it, like a piece of wood.[1] Were it the case that nothing resulted from the wrongdoing of these haters except the Muslims unsheathing their swords against them until the Day of Resurrection, that would be a sufficient deterrent to them and everyone who joined them. al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad said: 'Ali passed by two men in Madînah, after 'Uthmân had been killed and before allegiance was sworn to him, and they were saying: Ibn al-Bayda' (i.e., 'Uthmân) has been killed and his seniority in Islam and position among the Arabs was well known, but by Allâh no one is seeking to avenge him. 'Ali said: What did you say? He repeated it and 'Ali said: No, by Allâh, a lot of men will be killed and there will be a great deal of fighting, until the son of Maryam appears.[2]

The Muslims' sorrow at the murder of 'Uthman

The calamity had a great impact on the believers; they were

---

[1] *Siyar al-Shuhada', Duroos wa 'Ibar* by al-Suhaybaani, p. 67; *Tareekh Dimashq*, p. 458; *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/485

[2] *Tahqeeq Mawaaqif al-Sahâbah*, 1/485; *al-Tamheed wa'l-Bayaan*, p. 223

overwhelmed with grief and their eyes filled with tears; they spoke in praise of 'Uthmân and prayed for mercy for him. *Hassaan* ibn *Thâbit* (ﷺ) eulogized the caliph and lamented his killing a great deal, condemning the murderers and their actions.[1]

Ka'b ibn Maalik also lamented the murder of 'Uthmân in verse:

Then he restrained his hands and closed his door,

And he was certain that Allâh is not forgetful,

He said to the people of the house, Do not kill them!

May Allâh pardon every man who does not fight.

So how have you seen Allâh pour out upon them

Enmity and hatred after harmony with each other!

And how you have seen the good turning back from people

After him, the way the driving winds turn (the clouds) back!

And the close of our request is: All praise be to Allâh the Lord of the Worlds.

---------- ❑ ❑ ❑ ----------

[1] *Siyar al-Shuhada'* by al-Suhaybaani, p. 62

Conclusion

1- During the *Jaahiliyyah*, 'Uthmân was one of the best among his people. He was of prominent status, wealthy, very modest and well spoken, and his people loved him dearly and respected him. He never prostrated to any idol during the *Jaahiliyyah* and he never committed any immoral action; he never drank wine during the *Jaahiliyyah*.

2- 'Uthmân was thirty-four years old when Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq called him to Islam and he did not hesitate at all, He was among the first and was quick to respond to the call of Abu Bakr, thus he was among the earliest Muslims.

3- The Muslims rejoiced greatly when 'Uthmân became Muslim, and the bonds of love and brotherhood grew strong between him and them, and Allâh honoured him with marriage to the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), Ruqayyah.

4- Testing with calamity is something that comes to all individuals, communities, peoples, nations and states. This rule applied to the *Sahâbah* as well, and they bore immense calamities that even huge mountains would not be able to bear. They gave their wealth and shed their blood for the sake of Allâh, and went through a great deal of hardship, the true extent of which only Allâh knows. The prominent Muslims were not spared these hardships. 'Uthmân was persecuted and tortured for the sake of Allâh by his paternal uncle al-Hakam ibn Abi'l-'Aas.

5- Since the day 'Uthmân became Muslim, he stayed close to the Prophet (ﷺ) wherever he was, and he did not leave him except when he migrated with his permission or went on a

mission on which he sent him, which no one else could do as well as him. In this regard he was like all of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, as it was a special characteristic of theirs which made them better candidates for the caliphate one after another.

6- 'Uthmân was strongly involved in this great call from the first year, and he did not miss any of the important events, private or public, in the life of the Prophet (ﷺ), or any of the important news in the lives of the two caliphs. In other words, he did not miss anything of that which we would call nowadays the laying of the foundations of the Islamic state.

7- The education and training that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân - and all the *Sahâbah* - received was the Holy Qur'ân that was revealed from the Lord of the Worlds.

8- The strongest factor that influenced the character of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and honed his talents and unleashed his potential and purified his soul was his keeping company with the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and taking him as his teacher. 'Uthmân stayed close to the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) - in Makkah after he became Muslim, and in Madînah after he migrated. 'Uthmân organized his life and was keen to attend all lessons and acquire various branches of knowledge from the teacher and guide of mankind, to whom Allâh had taught good manners and taught him well.

9- 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was not one of those who stayed away from Badr because he was reluctant to go or he wanted to get out of it, as the followers of whims and desires claim and criticize him for being absent from Badr. He did not intend to disobey the Messenger (ﷺ), because the virtue attained by the people of Badr who were present at Badr was attained by means of obeying and following the Messenger (ﷺ). 'Uthmân came out with the people who came out with the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), but he (ﷺ) sent him back to look after his daughter. So he was doing the greatest mission by

obeying the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and staying behind in accordance with his instructions. A share of the booty and reward was given to him, so he shared the booty, virtue and reward with them because of his obedience to Allâh and His Messenger and following their commands.

10- With regard to al-Hudaybiyah, al-Muhibb al-Tabari mentioned some virtues that were unique to 'Uthmân, such as the fact that he was the only one for whom the Prophet (ﷺ) put his hand to represent the hand of 'Uthmân when the *Sahâbah* gave their oath of allegiance and 'Uthmân was absent. He was also the only one to convey the message of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) to the Muslim prisoners in Makkah, and the Prophet (ﷺ) stated that he agreed with 'Uthmân's decision not to perform tawaaf when he was sent on that mission.

11- The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) accepted the intercession of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân for 'Abd-Allâh ibn Abi'l-Sarh at the conquest of Makkah.

12- Social aspects of 'Uthmân's life in Madînah include his marriage to Umm Kulthoom, the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ), after the death of Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ); the death of 'Abd-Allâh ibn 'Uthmân; then the death of Umm Kulthoom (ﷺ).

13- Among his economic contributions to the building of the state were: his purchasing the well of Bi'r Roomah for twenty thousand dirhams, which 'Uthmân (ﷺ) donated for the use of rich and poor and wayfarers; expanding the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ); and spending a great deal on the army of Tabook.

14- Many *ahaadeeth* were narrated about the virtues of 'Uthmân, some of which refer to his virtue alongside others and some refer to his virtue alone. The Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) foretold the *fitnah* (turmoil) during which 'Uthmân would be killed.

15- 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was one of the *Sahâbah* and consultants whose opinion was sought with regard to important matters during the time of Abu Bakr. He was the second of two favoured by Abu Bakr: 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb for his resolve and strictness, and 'Uthmân for his kindness and deliberation. 'Uthmân played the role of a secretary, confidante and scribe.

16- 'Uthmân was held in high esteem by 'Umar. When the people wanted to ask 'Umar about anything, they would approach 'Uthmân and 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn 'Awf. 'Uthmân was known as *al-Radeef,* and *radeef* in Arabic refers to one who rides behind a man; the Arabs used this word to refer to one who they hoped would become the leader later on. If these two men could not do anything, they would bring in al-'Abbaas as the third.

17- One of the best good deeds that 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn 'Awf did was withdrawing from the race at the time of the shoora council and choosing for the ummah the one suggested by the decision-makers. He did the most perfect job on behalf of the ummah by choosing 'Uthmân.

18- There are false Shi'i and Raafidi reports that have been inserted into Islamic history and the story of the shoora process and appointment of 'Uthmân as caliph. The Orientalists seized upon them and circulated them further, and many historians, thinkers and modern writers have been influenced by them. They did not examine these reports or check their *isnaads* and texts, and thus they became widespread among the Muslims.

19- There is a great deal of evidence which indicates that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was more entitled to the caliphate, and there is no dispute among those who adhere to the Qur'ân and Sunnah concerning that. The companions of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) and those who came after them and followed their way, *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah,* are unanimously agreed that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was the most deserving of

the people to succeed as caliph after 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ).

20- When allegiance was sworn to 'Uthmân as caliph, he stood up to address the people and announced his policies, stating that he would adhere to the Qur'ân and Sunnah and the way of the two Shaykhs (i.e., Abu Bakr and 'Umar). He also indicated in his speech that he would run the affairs of the people on the basis of forbearance and wisdom, except in cases where a *hadd* punishment was deserved. He warned them against being content with this world and being tempted by its vanities, for fear that competition would lead to mutual hatred and envy, which would lead the ummah to division.

21- The character of 'Uthmân is regarded as that of a leader. He had the qualities of a guided leader, such as knowledge, ability to direct and teach people, forbearance, tolerance, gentleness, forgiveness, humility, modesty, temperance, generosity, courage, resolve, patience, justice, devotion to worship, fear of Allâh, weeping, examination of conscience, asceticism, gratitude, checking on people, defining specialties and making use of qualified people.

22- Learning the attributes of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and trying to follow in their footsteps is a sound step towards finding the qualities of leaders who are devoted to Allâh, who will be able to lead the ummah steadily towards its defined goals.

23- 'Uthmân's financial policy was based on the following foundations: applying the general Islamic financial policy, creating a balance between collecting money from people and taking care of them, taking what was due from the Muslims for the *bayt al-maal* of the Muslims, taking what was due from *ahl al-dhimmah* for the *bayt al-maal* of the Muslims, giving them what they were entitled to and not wronging them, ensuring the *kharaaj* collectors were honest and

trustworthy, and avoiding any financial corruption - so that all people could enjoy the blessings.

24- The expenditure at the time of 'Uthmân was spent on salaries for governors and troops, the navy, moving the port from al-Shu'aybah to Jeddah, digging wells, spending on the muezzins, and other things.

25- 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was accused by the thugs and rebels of spending the wealth of the *bayt al-maal* extravagantly and giving most of it to his relatives. These accusations were supported by a false propaganda campaign led by the Saba'is and maintained by the Raafidi Shi'ah until today. It was inserted into the books of history and dealt with by the thinkers and historians as if it was true, when in fact it is false and unproven because it is fabricated.

26- The reign of 'Uthmân is regarded as a continuation of the Rightly-Guided era, whose importance is based on its being a continuation of the Prophetic era and its closeness to that time. The era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in general terms, and with regard to judicial matters in particular, is regarded as a continuation of the Prophetic era, with its complete adherence to and preservation of all that was established at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), applying it thoroughly in letter and spirit.

27- 'Uthmân's plan of conquest was characterized by firmness and resolve, and had the following aims: subduing the Persian and Byzantine rebels, restoring Islamic rule to these lands, continuing *jihad* and conquests beyond those regions to cut off their supply lines, establishing bases where Muslim troops could be stationed to guard the Muslim lands, and establishing a naval force because the Muslims needed it and did not have it.

28- The military camps and borders of Islam at the time of 'Uthmân were the capitals of the major provinces. The camps

of Iraq were in Basra and Kufah, the camp of Syria was in Damascus after all of Syria came under the governorship of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufyân, the camp of Egypt was al-Fustaat. These camps were established to protect the Islamic state, continue the conquests and spread Islam.

29- The most famous leaders of conquests at the time of 'Uthmân (ﷺ) were: al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, Sulaymaan ibn Rabee'ah, 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn Rabee'ah and Habeeb ibn Maslamah.

30- The battle of Dhaat al-Sawaari was clear proof that sound belief *('aqeedah)* may prevail over military experience and superiority in numbers and equipment. The Byzantines had been masters of the sea since ancient times, and they had lengthy experience in naval warfare, whereas the Muslims were new to travelling and fighting on the sea.

31- Among the most important lessons that we learn from the conquests of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân are: the fulfilment of Allâh's promise to grant victory and cause the believers to prevail; developments in the arts of war and politics; the Muslims began to wage campaigns by sea; gathering intelligence about the enemy; and keenness to be united in the face of the enemy.

32- From the story of the compilation of the Qur'ân at the time of 'Uthmân, we can see the extent to which the *Sahâbah* (ﷺ) understood the verses which forbid differing, as Allâh forbade dissent and warned against it. Because of their deep understanding of the verses, Hudhayfah (ﷺ) was very distressed when he heard signs of difference in the recitation of Qur'ân. He went straight to Madînah and told 'Uthmân of what he had seen and heard, and within a short period of time 'Uthmân took the right decision and put an end to the differences.

33- Employing the measures to create harmony among the Muslims and unite them is one of greatest forms of *jihad*. This

is an important step in strengthening the Muslims and establishing their state and the rule of sharee'ah. This is the understanding of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and was manifested most clearly in 'Uthmân's uniting the ummah in reading one Mus-haf.

34- The regions of the Islamic state at the time of 'Uthmân (ﷺ) included: Makkah, Madînah, Bahrain, Yamaamah, Yemen, Hadramawt, Syria, Armenia, Egypt, Basra and Kufah.

35- 'Uthmân employed various means of keeping an eye on his workers and finding out how they were doing. These included: attending *Hajj*, asking those who came from other regions and provinces, sending inspectors to the provinces, summoning the governors and questioning them, and other methods.

36- The rights of governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs included: obedience so long as it did not involve disobedience towards Allâh, offering sincere advice to the governors, conveying sound news to them, respecting them after they were dismissed, and giving them their salaries.

37- The duties of governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs included: establishing the rules of Islam, ensuring security in their lands, *jihad* for the sake of Allâh, ensuring that provisions were available to the people, appointing workers and employees, taking care of *ahl al-dhimmah*, consulting the wise people in their provinces, looking at the province's needs for development and paying attention to the social needs of the inhabitants.

38- The Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Uthmân is an example to be followed and his actions set a constitutional precedent for this ummah. Just as 'Umar set an example for those who came after him of keeping relatives away from positions of authority, 'Uthmân set a precedent for those who came after him of bringing relatives close and giving them positions of

authority if they were qualified for that. Everything that 'Uthmân was criticized for is within the bounds of permissibility.

39- Those relatives whom 'Uthmân (ﷺ) appointed as governors had proven that they were qualified and had the ability to run the affairs of their provinces, and Allâh granted the conquest of many lands at their hands. They ruled the people on the basis of justice and kindness. Some of them had worked for the state at the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (ﷺ).

40- The one who studies the correct historical facts and the biographies of the men whose help 'Uthmân sought, and learns how their *jihad* had a great impact on he call of Islam and how their good management of affairs brought tremendous results that led to prosperity and success for this ummah, will not be able to stop himself from expressing out loud his admiration and pride, the more he studies this period of Islamic history.

41- 'Uthmân (ﷺ) was not safe from attack by many researchers on heir unfair books which are based on unexamined reports about the era of 'Uthmân, because many of them quoted weak and Raafidi reports, and based on these reports they made unfair judgements against 'Uthmân, such as Ta-Ha Hussein in *al-Fitnah* al-Kubra, Raadi 'Abd al-Raheem in *al-Nuzum al-Islamiyyah,* Muhammad al-Rayyis in *al-Nazariyaat al-Siyaasiyyah,* 'Ali Husayn al-Kharbutli in *al-Islam wa'l-Khilaafah,* Abu'l-A'la al-Mawdoodi in *al-Mulk wa'l-Khilaafah,* Sayyid Qutub in *al-'Adaalah al-Ijtimaa'iyyah,* and others. Indeed 'Uthmân is the caliph who has been wronged; his early opponents fabricated lies about him and the later Muslims were not fair towards him either.

42- The historical facts state that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) did not banish Abu Dharr (ﷺ), rather Abu Dharr asked him for permission (to leave Madînah) and he gave him permission, but the enemies of 'Uthmân (ﷺ) spread false rumours that he had

banished him.

43- Abu Dharr (ﷺ) was not influenced at all by the views of the Jew 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba'. He settled in al-Ribdhah and remained there until he died, and he was not involved in any of the *fitnah* (turmoil).

44- There were numerous causes for the turmoil which led to the murder of 'Uthmân (ﷺ), including: prosperity and its effect on society; the nature of social change at the time of 'Uthmân; the fact that 'Uthmân (ﷺ) came after 'Umar (ﷺ); the departure of the senior *Sahâbah* from Madînah; *jaahili* tribalism; the cessation of conquests; piety that was based on ignorance; the conspiracy of those who bore grudges against Islam; precise plans to stir up trouble against 'Uthmân; use of different means to incite the people; and the role played by 'Abd-Allâh ibn Saba' in the *fitnah*.

45- The turmoil initially flared up in Kufah, then its instigators were banished to Syria, then they settled with 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Khaalid ibn al-Waleed in al-Jazeerah. Then they returned to Kufah after they received a letter from Yazeed ibn Qays telling them to come to Kufah.

46- 'Uthmân's policy in dealing with the turmoil was based on forbearance, deliberation and justice. He employed measures to confront it such as: sending inspection committees; writing a comprehensive letter to the people of the regions which was like a general announcement to all the Muslims; consulting the governors of the regions; establishing proof against the rebels; and responding to some of their demands.

47- The one who contemplates the way in which 'Uthmân (ﷺ) dealt with the turmoil that occurred during his reign will be able to derive guidelines which will help the Muslim to deal with turmoil. These guidelines include: verifying claims, adhering to justice, being fair, forbearance and deliberation, paying attention to that which benefits the Muslims,

avoiding that which creates division among the Muslims, keeping quiet and not speaking too much, consulting sincere scholars, and seeking guidance from the ahaadeeth of the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) about *fitnah* (turmoil).

48- It seems that there are many reasons why 'Uthmân did not allow the *Sahâbah* to fight. They are: following the advice of the Messenger (ﷺ) who had told him in private about the day of the siege; the promise that he had made to him and his patience in adhering to it; and the fact that he did not want to be the first caliph after the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) to shed the blood of the Muslims. Moreover, the evildoers were not after anyone else, so he did not want to use the believers as shields to protect himself, rather he wanted to sacrifice himself in order to save them, knowing that this turmoil would lead to his murder. That was in accordance with what the Messenger of Allâh (ﷺ) had told him when he gave him the glad tidings of Paradise in return for a calamity that would befall him and that he would be killed adhering to the truth. That was in accordance with the advice of Ibn Salaam (ﷻ) when he told him to refrain (from fighting) because it would give him a stronger stance against the rebels (on the Day of Judgement).

49- The killer of 'Uthmân was an Egyptian man, but the sources do not give his name. As for the accusation that Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr killed 'Uthmân with his arrow head, this is false and the reports concerning that are weak, in addition to their texts being odd because they go against the saheeh reports which state that the killer was an Egyptian man.

50- The *Sahâbah* (ﷻ) are all innocent of the blood of 'Uthmân (ﷻ). The saheeh reports and historical events confirm that the *Sahâbah* were innocent of inciting the people against 'Uthmân or taking part in the turmoil against him, as we have quoted the *saheeh* reports.

51- 'Uthmân was well aware of the conspiracy and its aims.

Indeed, he managed to penetrate the ranks of the conspirators and find out about all their plans, and he faced the events with great courage, but he did not want to be the first one to unsheathe the sword against the Muslims, and he preferred to save the ummah by sacrificing himself, which is the pinnacle of selflessness.

52- The turmoil of 'Uthmân's murder was the cause of a great deal of further turmoil and it cast its shadow on the events that followed it. People's hearts changed and lying became widespread, and deviation from the laws and teachings of Islam began from that point.

53- Wronging and transgressing against others unlawfully are causes of doom in this world and in the Hereafter, as Allâh says:

﴿وَتِلْكَ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ أَهْلَكْنَٰهُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا۟ وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِم مَّوْعِدًا﴾

"And these towns (population, f 'Aad, Thamood) We destroyed them when they did wrong. And We appointed a fixed time for their destruction" (*Al-Kahf* 18:59).

The one who studies the situation of those who rebelled against 'Uthmân (ﷺ) and transgressed against him will find that Allâh did not give them respite rather He humiliated them and wreaked vengeance on them, and none was spared.

54- The calamity had a great impact on the believers; they were overwhelmed with grief and their eyes filled with tears; they spoke in praise of 'Uthmân and prayed for mercy for him. Hassaan ibn Thâbit (ﷺ) eulogized the caliph and lamented his killing a great deal, condemning the murderers and their actions in lines of moving verse that history has preserved for us and which are not hidden away from us by the barriers of time.

55- This is what Allâh has enabled me to compile and analyze in this book: *'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, his life and times*. Whatever in it is correct is by the grace of Allâh to me, and whatever is incorrect, I seek the forgiveness of Allâh, may He be exalted, and repent to Him, and Allâh and His Messenger have nothing to do with it. It is sufficient for me that I was keen to state the truth and present the proof and evidence which indicates that 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân was entitled to the caliphate. I ask Allâh to benefit my Muslim brothers by means of this book, and cause those who read it to remember me in their du'aa's, for the prayer of a man for his brother in his absence will be answered, *in sha Allâh*. I end this book with the words of Allâh:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُو مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

"And those who came after them say : Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful" (*Al-Hashr* 59:10)

And the close of our request is: All praise be to Allâh the Lord of the Worlds.







In this book, Dr. As-Sallabi presents the life of the third caliph of Islam, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, and highlights his great achievements, as well the issues and turmoils that he faced due to the hypocrisy movement that plagued the Muslim society. He also addresses the misrepresentations of 'Uthmân, fabricated by his enemies and detractors and perpetuated, inadvertently or otherwise, by writers and historians, as well as the activities of the hypocrites and the effort they put into fabricating these lies and causing division in the *Ummah*, the effects of which Muslims are still suffering today.

The study of history is of great importance, especially for Muslims who have been denied access to their heritage in many ways due to the upheavals that befell the Muslim world in recent decades and centuries, and due to tampering and insertions in their own books of history.





DARUSSALAM

